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THE ABOLISHING OF DEATH

BASIL KING

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THE ABOLISHING OF DEATH

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THE ABOLISHING OF DEATH

BY

BASIL KING

Author of "The Inner Shrine," etc.



NEW YORK
COSMOPOLITAN BOOK CORPORATION
1919

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“**WHAT** avails it that science has come to treat space and time as simply forms of thought, and the material world as hypothetical, and withal our pretension of property and even of self-hood are fading with the rest, if, at last, even our thoughts are not finalities, but the incessant flowing and ascension reach these also, and each thought which yesterday was a finality, to-day is yielding to a larger generalization?”

EMERSON.

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FOREWORD

FOREWORD

I

It will be observed that the following pages are offered to the reader not as proofs but as phenomena. Moreover, they are presented not as phenomena of an unusual kind but as specimens of a type of writing which if not precisely new has become remarkably abundant. So many are doing it that the very numbers would have a cheapening effect if it were not part of the contention that everyone can do it, and that communication with the plane next above us is as natural as speech. It is because so many people all over the world are putting forth this claim, while so many others too timid or too conservative to put it forth, are longing to see it justified, that the subject urges itself on the mind of the day as one to be taken up.

What is happening is briefly this. In some circle in which, for various reasons, the questions that have to do with death and the

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possibilities after death are of paramount interest someone is found with a pencil in the fingers writing in a hand not naturally his own, with a propulsion he does not consciously control, sentiments he cannot recognize as having formed themselves in his mind. As far as he knows he is to this "message" no more than the wire to the telegram. To the best of his self-analysis he neither originates the ideas nor of his own purposed act commits them to the paper. The thoughts, the words, and the tracing of the sentences seem to him to be governed from outside. The physical sensation in the hand is unlike anything he knows in his own mind-directed acts. Those who have had this experience will, I think, bear me out when I say that it resembles no other motion of the body. The nearest expression I can find for it is that it is not that of the hand guiding the pencil but of the pencil guiding the hand. The pencil becomes the intelligent thing, and the hand the mere instrument.

As authority for these "messages" names are signed which belong to people known to have passed beyond death, and who declare themselves to be in touch, in whatever con-

stitutes love and solicitude, with those they have left behind.

Questions are then asked to which the replies are at times obviously true, at times plausible, at times inexact, and not infrequently sheer nonsense. But the important point is not whether what comes over is true or of value, but whether or not anything comes over. Of the present fallibility of the so-called messages something is said later in this preface and also in the articles. In passing I will only state that fallibility is not a decisive factor in the case. It pertains to all forms of human transmission that we know anything about. There is no certainty that the thought in one mind will be conveyed exactly to another by telephone or telegram or wireless or writing or printing or speech: By all of these methods error is not only possible but of daily occurrence, the highest ideas of the statesman, the poet, and the editor being often rendered meaningless. If correctness of transmission be made a condition of acceptance, then we must reject not only our new discoveries but our time-honored methods of communication, for all of them err. Furthermore, before we got

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our present control of them they erred more than they do now. Some of the first experiments with the electric wire were so absurd that nothing but the vision of an ultimate approximate success sustained the inventors or discoverers in making the early tests. As far as their fellow human beings went there was nothing but derision or discouragement.

There is no small analogy then between the pioneers of this new form of intercourse and those who literally compelled the world to accept the methods with which we have become familiar. The same efforts to dissuade have attended all who have tried to go forward. The same jeers have accompanied all initial uncertainties. The same conviction and pluck are as necessary to-day to stem the tide of opposition as if the world had not already made almost incredible discoveries.

My point is, however, that no discoveries have ever been made without failures at the start. It will be noted that most of the great advances have been in the direction of communication between men and minds. Easy intercommunion might be called the great human objective, certainly ever since the invention of printing. The steamer, the rail-

way, the telegraph, the telephone, the motor-car, the wireless, the airplane are all modes of making intercourse quicker and more direct. Each one of them is a marvel; and each one of them has been derided. Fifty years ago the horseless carriage and trans-oceanic flight would have called up as much in the way of incredulous scorn as the idea of a living and active communion of saints at the present minute.

So that the fact of inaccuracy in much of what purports to come over may reasonably be counted out. No one pretends that the attempt to communicate with the plane next above us is in more than the experimental stage. It is where the telephone was when Graham Bell first thought that sounds might be coming over it; it is where the airship was when it gave its first shiver on the ground. Sure flight is not yet; speech easily recognizable by everyone is still of the future. But the question arises whether in view of all that man has attained to in intercommunion the endeavor to reach these higher realms should not be carried on.

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II

The negative attitude of mind being so much the more general a few words with regard to it may not be out of place.

The instinctive stand of the ordinary, conventional individual is that the thing which has never been done cannot be done, and that it is waste of time and energy to consider the matter further. This view would so obviously limit all human undertaking that it would be folly to give it a second thought did it not unhappily express the mental outlook of the immense mass of mankind. To a large degree it is that of the comparatively enlightened, and of those who rejoice in what has already been accomplished in the teeth of just such denial as theirs. Our universities, churches, and business offices are peopled with men and women whose first impulse is to range themselves against the advance of any new endeavor or idea. Calling themselves cautious, conservative, and steady they are in reality not any of the three. They are simply retarders of the race. Without knowing it they are servants of him who defined himself in the words of Goethe as "the spirit

that denies—*der Geist der stets verneint.*” He is also the spirit that balks progress. In his quiver he has all the weapons with which the backward love to assail the alert—ridicule, scorn, sorrow, and outraged loyalty to the past. Among the many forces arrayed against the attempt to make the Communion of Saints not a dead letter in a creed but a vital and working concept in the life the Spirit that Denies bulks largest.

Next comes perhaps that religious belief which teaches that in Jesus Christ and His Church all is revealed, and that it is well-nigh blasphemous to seek further. Under this grouping may be classed most of those who regard themselves as constitutionally orthodox, as well as all those who live by exercising spiritual domination over other people’s minds. “What we do not know you had better not meddle with,” might be given as the essence of one kind of religious teaching, and, “What we do not know no one was ever meant to know,” might be reasonably taken as that of another. Those who get their religion from what Henry Talbot calls “religion-brokers,” being content with these inhibitions, the direct statements of Jesus Christ

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are overlooked. Those statements represent His religion not as static but progressive. He never pretended to be telling His disciples all the great truths that were to be known. Like His apostle afterwards, He could have said, "I have fed you with milk and not with meat." What He did say was that "when He the Spirit of truth is come *He shall lead you into all truth*" as well as "bring all things to your remembrance whatsoever I have told you." He never pretended to be doing all the great things that were to be done. On the contrary, He declared that for those who followed along His lines not only would His works be possible but "greater works than these shall ye do because I go to my Father." These greater works those who rest on their orthodoxy have never lifted a finger to undertake, while even such works as their Master performed they have not attempted to repeat. When others do make such attempts they are the first to raise the cry, "Don't!" It will be noted that I refer here only to those for whom it is the first article of the unwritten creed that Christianity must be non-developing. They are unfortunately many. At the same time there

are not wanting sincere Christians in all the sects whose most eager demand is for a further unfolding of truth—seizing that which Jesus Christ made manifest and manifesting more, going on from milk to meat.

The third opponent of the search for new possibilities in the universe is the man for whom life is material in the first place, and spiritual only in the second, or not spiritual at all. For him a poor material explanation is preferable to a good spiritual one, and a readiness to accept material speculations as absolute proofs makes dealing with him difficult. Considering himself intellectual he is as purblind in one way as the narrowly religious man is in another. Both are static; both are dogmatic. With the same defects or the same good qualities there is often between them the same antagonism that exists between brothers in blood. Bunyan might have personified this type as Mr. Self-satisfied and Mrs. Know-it-all, and its exponents abound in our more educated walks in life. Appealing to the intellectual god of the hour the protest they make against all such investigations as this is in the sacred name of Psychology.

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That psychology is right in trying to explain all the phenomena we have to class as "psychic" on the grounds of sheer physical mentality I make no attempt to deny. Physical mentality being that with which we have first to deal it must be made to go as far as it will. To attempt to make it go further than it will is a mistake of which no true psychologist would be guilty.

"The psychologists," writes Henry Talbot, "study along lines which are likely to lead to communication with us; but this does not necessarily happen. They are a little further ahead on the right road than most lay minds—provided, that is, that they seek the truth unprejudiced."

"What about the psychologists who deny that such communication as this can take place?"

"Those are the prejudiced, who step out of the way of truth, lose faith in science, and fall behind in the procession."

The answer to my next question raises a point on which some emphasis may be laid.

"To what extent are the psychologists right in explaining this communication as due to thought-transference?"

“It is always thought-transference when the mind of the transmitter is sufficiently clear. But self-created thoughts on the part of the transmitter sometimes intervene, and deceive even the sincere.”

The psychologist, as I understand him, admits that the transmitter may be reporting the transferred thoughts of someone on this plane. Why then may he not just as readily report the transferred thoughts of someone on the next plane? It has to be assumed, of course, that the next plane exists, and that those who have reached it are able to be near us. But many people who have no difficulty in making this admission still find it easier to believe that the transmitter reports the thoughts of someone a hundred or a thousand miles away on earth rather than what comes from an invisible person standing close beside them. My only argument here is that if we once admit the continuity of life, as the majority of Christians do admit it, with an enhancement rather than a diminution of powers, then thought-transfer from that plane to this would seem to be comparatively easy, while between those who are still on this

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plane it is acknowledged as comparatively hard.

Of psychology in general I have only to add that in this connection it has nothing to say, as yet at any rate, which is not confessedly matter of opinion. The science itself is far less dogmatic than some of its professors, while its professors are less dogmatic in their turn than many of those whose knowledge of their teaching goes little beyond a smattering. It may even be contended that the wider the knowledge the more generous the liberality, and the smaller scope for the Spirit that Denies.

The last form of objection of which I should like to say a word is that which considers this investigation dangerous. Of course it is dangerous. No step forward was ever taken by the human race that was not dangerous. If there were no danger there would be no daring, and if there were no daring there would be no courage, and if there were no courage we should all be flabby and inert. Danger is that quality in life which teaches us not to be afraid.

“There is much danger in imperfect understanding of these things,” Henry Talbot

confesses. "A transmitter with violent desires and opinions can persuade himself that these opinions and desires are heaven sent. He can become quite wild and intoxicated by the discovery that communication exists, and then obtrude himself upon the clear road, making an obstacle of his own thoughts which like a poison villify the water passing over them. His faith becomes turbid, and evil and good are inextricably mixed, while the transmitter contends to both others and himself that he transmits the unadulterated truth."

No high aim was ever pursued by man without some men pursuing it unwisely; and yet if one man's folly were urged as a reason why another man's search for truth should be abandoned human endeavor would cease. A poet and a painter have both expressed regret that I should lend myself to an inquiry which to their knowledge has in specified instances done harm. But so has the writing of poetry and the painting of pictures—on the part of the unskillful. Much talent, otherwise good, has been wasted in these ways, and many hearts tried; and yet my friends would never stay their own hands

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because of this consideration. The bringing of the motor-car and the airplane to the point at which we have them to-day cost tragedy and grief throughout the world; but no one balked at the price when the thing purchased was to be such a triumph. In the same way other friends have lamented my taking up an interest discredited by frauds; but who would refuse to work in a field because freaks and fakes had entered it before him? The very fact that they have confused the issue is a reason for trying to make it clear.

In speaking of people attempting to get communication Henry Talbot says:

“It is best to tell them how to do it, but to warn them of the miscarriages and self-deceptions against which the sincere can guard themselves. . . . It is best to warn them emphatically against dangers, as well as to tell them that if they become too intensely absorbed in the things of this world to the neglect of their own earthly duties communication will be cut off from this side. We wish to help, never to hinder, and we refuse to create freaks or to have transactions with them. . . . A sincere and single-hearted transmitter,” he writes elsewhere, “will know

the state of his own mind, whether prepared to receive messages or not. He must act according to his feelings. Do not work when tired, worried, or preoccupied by thoughts of an absorbing nature, whether sorrowful or joyful."

Of the difficulties inherent in all efforts to reach truth he says, in speaking of philosophy in particular:

"You have got the facts of existence tangled in your minds, and your philosophers attempt to unravel the skeins. Sometimes they help, and sometimes they make the trouble worse by pulling facts out of place to help their arguments. The best that can be said of philosophy in general is that it is a sincere attempt to straighten what is twisted. There are so many different knots to be untied that any sincere philosophy or religion helps in the straightening process; but there are times when the disturbance caused by unsympathetic co-operative methods of unraveling seem a remedy worse than the ill itself. This is, however, not the case. Every search after truth, in whatever branch, helps toward intelligent harmony and the establishment of conscious rhythm."

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I said something here of the progress in communication that might be made if philosophy, psychology, and religion could all be induced to work together. To this he replied:

“It would be a wonderful help, certainly; but knowledge of every sort—the finding of truth—helps us to establish communication, as it enables you better to understand creation and its resources.”

I asked if our communication with the next plane could be considered the culmination to all earthly knowledge.

“No; it is only a branch of progress. There are other culminations, or rather crises, of discovery of a different nature. There is no termination to knowledge; but temporary acquisitions facilitate the progress onward.”

I had already begun to speak of something else when he reverted to the same train of thought.

“It is like children playing with the separated parts of an automobile. The parts are useless to them, and yet full of a potential power. One child puts two parts together, another three, as he progresses in understanding, until these groups of machinery

are joined to other groups, and gradually the whole machine is put together as it should be. Then with the necessary equipment and an intelligent driver it can move forward, with every part working harmoniously with every other. It is so with life; and discovery in every branch of knowledge is a step forward in grouping the parts of the machine. The day is not yet, but will be, when the perfect complete automobile, equipped and driven faultlessly, will move forward as the embodiment of man's discovery and understanding of the use of God's gifts."

III

In some such spirit as this, and with an immense diffidence, I venture to offer these pages to the public. I feel myself like a child who has picked up an object which may be part of a great machine, or may be only a bright pebble. Personally I believe that it will be found to fit into something else, which may fit into something else, which may fit into something else, till knowledge is linked as a vast unit revealing God. Of those who do not think so I beg no more than the tolerance of my point of view which I honestly

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extend to theirs. Of all dangers, since we have been speaking of dangers, that which seems to me the most dangerous is the closed or the hard-shell mind. Better any credulity than that, any chasing after wandering fires! I ask here not to be misunderstood. I am not pleading for the easy mark in wild ideas, or a foolish volatility. I am only saying this, that if one had to choose between being a bigot or a simpleton I think one would choose to be a simpleton. The open mind is among the most beautiful gifts of God. The man who has it wears among other men a kind of radiance. It makes him kindly, genial, open-hearted, open-handed, and in some measure everybody's friend. In such a man there is nothing prejudiced, nothing narrow, nothing bitter, nothing hard. He may be shy and reserved; he may have faults and weaknesses; he may be far less morally perfect than some whose minds are closed; but he will have the adorable quality of being human, with the bigness of nature which goes into that splendid word.

And of all human characters with whom I have ever had dealings Henry Talbot begins to assume for me the largest and most

lovable proportions of the soul. I am willing that the reader should think of what I say as applying to a real character, or to one whom I have little by little built up out of my own imagination. Literature is full of fictitious men and women who are as real to us as our friends. Think of this man in this way if you like, while I try to tell you something of what he has come to mean to me.

In the first place there was never anyone more approachable. His welcome is like that of a generous wide-open door. "I am all love," he kept saying in the first days of the intercourse, and, as I have hinted in the course of the articles, that conviction has been carried over from his atmosphere into ours. Love, yearning, help, and an overflowing sympathy fill at least the imagination the minute we begin to talk.

And then I must emphasize his geniality. Intercourse with him is not solemn, it is not portentous, it could not be qualified by the connotations of the eloquent word "high-brow." It could more easily be summed up under the somewhat similar word "homey." Our conversations are easy, simple, and famil-

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iar, and though I have quoted chiefly its high lights, it is always in touch with the things of every day. It is in touch with the things of every day as those things are when seen through a lense that gives them dignity, bringing out what is worthy in them and noble, while keeping to the sunny air of cheerfulness. He is often amusing, often witty, though never ceasing to be solicitous with an extraordinary tenderness. Into the midst of a discussion such as some of those I have reported he will interject a question as to my other professional work, making useful suggestions and throwing out a hint for future work. For the novel he has the same respect as for any other manifestation of eternal energy, a trait in which he differs from many who are with us on this plane. Wise, kind, patient, sympathetic, human, humorous, big-hearted, broad-minded, he gives one an idea of what we all may be when the evil is left out of the composition, and nothing remains but goodness. It is the only instance in which I have ever come mentally face to face with what St. Paul calls the measure of the fullness of the stature of Christ on the part of a man like ourselves. It shows

in quite a wonderful way what a man like ourselves can come to. Even if the contact be no more than that of my imagination with an imaginary being—as the reader may easily believe—I must acknowledge it as a privilege.

IV

Lastly I must say that I have only my word to offer that all I state happened just as I have stated it. During the progress of these articles through the pages of a magazine several have written to ask me if I were not hoaxing the public with a purely fictitious adventure. It is needless to say that I am not.

The articles, as mentioned in at least one of them, were written for an important magazine; but I may be permitted to amplify here what lack of space obliged me to curtail there as to their inception.

I had been asked by the editor of that magazine, as I say later, to write a series of four articles on the general topic of Immortality. Three of these articles were written and two were in the proof before this writing began. They were written according

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to traditional Christian principles, were constructed along the solid, didactic lines to which we are accustomed, and in them the reader would have found everything he had heard before and which would not have called out in him a new thought.

Among the first things that the writing said was, "Do not teach — do not propound." Going on to state that the speaker was taking much interest in these articles, it bade me be content to narrate what happened to me at first hand, and let the reader form his own opinion. Thereupon was poured out a mass of material from which I had only to select certain portions to explain. I could have selected more and explained less, but in following that method the whole would have lacked cohesion. It must be remembered that these things were said in conversations, brief, broken, or when longer, pursued, as conversations are, without continuity of thought. Some explanation and arrangement was necessary to enable the reader to follow what was perfectly clear to those present when the "talks" took place. While the explanations speak for themselves, I may call the reader's attention to what I say in the prelude to the

first article, that, beyond bringing such matter as had to do with the same theme into immediate connection, and a little punctuation, I have taken absolutely no liberty with the text. Once, as I have said, I suppress a redundant "the," at another time a "which." A few times some simple word that the transmitter has left out in haste has been restored, as in the rewriting of a cable dispatch in full. Otherwise all stands as originally written. In no case has there been the slightest tampering with the sense.

I may add that all that I have quoted was given me expressly for the articles. Much more has come over, far more remarkable in range of thought and beauty of expression; but that I am told is for a special purpose which will be announced when the time comes. I have been careful to refrain from citing so much as a line of it.

It is not pretended that in what I give everything is new, or striking, or of equal value. A feeling exists in some minds that all that comes over—assuming that anything comes over—should be something never before uttered. But man has done some thinking for himself, and where he has arrived at

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truth his conclusions cannot be improved upon. There were many subjects on which Jesus of Nazareth, the most original of all thinkers, could only repeat what had been said long before His time, though undoubtedly throwing on old deductions a new light. Similarly, by far the greater part of the fragments here—they are only fragments—cover ground with which we are familiar. On that ground, however, there is here and there a sudden flash of beauty, while at times old concepts are re-expressed with meanings which, I venture to believe, will be to at least some others as new as they are to me. At certain points, which I have not the space to indicate, the utterances amount to what is almost a revelation, though in saying that I speak for myself alone. The eternal permanence and success of all right-minded production as described in the second article, and the conception of age as given in the third, are to my knowledge not only new to our sphere, but valuable to the spirit.

The articles having been written as articles are left as articles, with no more than an occasional verbal change and a few additions.

Of the transmitter I will merely repeat

what I declare more than once, that as far as she is concerned deception is out of the question. That there may be subconscious participation she is prepared to learn; but consciously she is no more than an instrument. As an instrument, like any other instrument, there are moments when she is not at her best. The chief speaker mentions the fact that occasionally she shows "signs of haste," and it is plain that she is sometimes fatigued. When that is so the message is blurred, not in the meaning so much as in the expression. The somewhat long passage in the second article—The New Heaven—which speaks of those who go over through violence, is a case in point. The significance is evident; the verbal cast is not quite exact. In general, however, as I think will be admitted, the style of the speaker, simple, lucid, and supple, is admirably given. In no case have I seen the transmitter pause as much as a minute for reflection, and the longer replies are written with no more than a vague comprehension on her part of what she is taking down.

In conclusion I have only to remind the reader that I am not putting forth a theory

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or trying to convince anyone. I am neither teaching nor propounding. My task is finished when I humbly place this material before him, trusting with confidence to the freedom and tolerance of the open mind.

THE ABOLISHING OF DEATH

THE ABOLISHING OF DEATH

WHEN, a few months ago, the editor of an important magazine kindly asked me for a series of articles on the new attitude which the world is slowly beginning to take up with regard to the subject of Life and Death, I undertook the task with some confidence. While the aspects of the theme commonly known as "psychic" had never specially interested me, I had given much thought to all the views that go by the name of "Christian." My convictions, which remain unchanged, were based on a belief in the reality of the death and resurrection of the Nazarene Master; and I humbly drew the same conclusions as those presented by the New Testament writers, that, He being the first instance of what would one day be possible to all men, all men were destined to follow where He led.

I believed, and believe, with St. Paul that "the last enemy which shall be destroyed is death"—but that death shall also be destroyed.

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In other words, I believe that the whole human race will one day progress to a point at which this corruptible shall put on incorruption, and this mortal immortality, without going through the changes of decay, death, and burial, so hideous and repugnant to the average mind.

Nevertheless, when I attempted to handle this theme from what I hoped was a union of the traditional with the modern point of view, the result was unsatisfactory. A first effort was made and abandoned. A second effort went so far that two articles were in type. Then certain things began to happen. Astonishing me from the first, the result was, for some time, no more than astonishment. When it passed beyond that stage, I begged the editor to allow me to withdraw the articles that had so nearly appeared, and to give in their place a brief account not of what I had read in history, sacred or otherwise, or of what others had experienced, but of what had been occurring to myself.

In doing this, I beg to say that I have no message to deliver, no theory to advance. If I state the conclusions to which I feel myself obliged to come, it will be only because I

have come to them. With those who think differently, I can have no quarrel, because so lately—if these things had been told me by someone else—I should have been as skeptical as anyone. All I ask is that, in telling my story, which the reader will see to be a simple one, I shall be credited with the effort to give the facts as accurately as I can recall them. Whatever else may be of interest—and I trust there will be something—the reader will see at once to be not mine.

I

The interest in psychic phenomena which has been specially in evidence during the past three or four years is generally attributed to the desire of the thousands of bereaved to communicate with their sons, husbands, and brothers violently hurled into other phases of existence. This, as far as it goes, is undoubtedly correct; and yet, I venture to think, it accounts for only part of the yearning which has affected so many of the thinking people in the British Empire and the United States, as perhaps elsewhere. The true impulse lies deeper down—so deep down that probably only those accustomed

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to analyze human emotions have been aware of it.

It proceeds, I think, from a wave of intense dissatisfaction with this present world. If there is a better world, we want to be assured of it, and to be assured of it quickly. We are like passengers on a magnificent ship that has been torpedoed. It is sinking beneath our feet. Much that we confidently trusted to is giving way. It is not giving way in one place alone, but everywhere. There was a time when those who disapproved of America could go to Europe, and those who disapproved of Europe could go to America. Now the disturbance, or the fear of disturbance, is general. For minds seeking a solid basis on which to stand, there is none in sight. Millions of people, accustomed to feel themselves safe and strong, have waked to see they are in danger, and to realize their helplessness against the advance of undiscernible and perhaps invisible foes.

For we had been forming a world exactly the opposite to the one we thought we were building. We thought we were turning out a stable thing, well founded, well supported, growing to an apex at which the few but fit

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would shine like stars. It is the most natural of our impulses to ask, "Where is this dream now?" Some of the mightiest countries, materially speaking, of five years ago are in ruins. Rulers so powerful that they invited comparison with demigods have gone down to a tragic end that will provide dramatic themes for future generations. Merely to have been great from the material point of view has become, in a large part of Europe, an invitation to disaster. Those countries that have escaped absolute overthrow have been saved by the thin spiritual principle that, through the most material of eras, has persisted among them like a sickly plant—but still has persisted. A minimum of ten righteous men would have saved Sodom, and doubtless these nations have been able to provide the requisite element. But even there the iron has entered into the soul, and England, France, Italy, and the United States will never, so those who undertake to forecast the future tell us, be what they were again.

For with the downfall of certain powers and the survival of certain others we are not at the end of the changes in store for us.

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Rather, we appear to be only at the beginning. It is safe to say that in the interval between November, when the armistice was signed, and April, when these words are being written, we have seen a more tremendous shifting of the human basis than during the years of actively shedding blood. We are learning the alphabet of what the war has meant; but the book has not yet been written. Old things have passed away; all things have become new. The quicker we are to seize that fact, the easier it will be for us. The reactionary—the man who thinks he can go back to where 1914 left off, who attempts to begin again on a basis that is material and nothing more—is an anachronism. He is not fitted to teach or do business in the new world that is emerging. True, we eat, we drink, we plant, we build, much as we did before; but the inner perception is different. Faintly we are beginning to discern the fact that the real world is the spiritual world, and that a spiritual civilization must spring from the ruins of the old if man is to keep his place on the planet.

The conception is, of course, not new. Every religious teacher since Abraham has

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made this his ideal, and at no time has the vision been allowed to lapse. In our modern world, two voices, the one boldly, the other faintly, have emphasized this truth, with the deductions to be drawn from it.

Of these, the first has been the Church. Under this heading, awkward for the purpose, I group that whole agglomeration of sects which go by the name of "Christian." Whatever criticism can be leveled against them this one thing, at least, can be affirmed to their credit—that they have never ceased to proclaim the spiritual world as the enduring one. Never was nobler or more continuous testimony borne to a cause.

During a densely material age, the Church continued to preach, and was barely listened to. Then a second voice spoke. It spoke humbly, with no assertion of a mission to teach, with no intention beyond the release of what might be established as fact from a mass of vulgarity and claptrap.

It spoke, too, as such voices commonly speak, from the most unexpected quarter. As long as the scientific spirit had been active among men, it had been considered the enemy of the supersensuous; but all at once, in the

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last quarter of the nineteenth century, when salvation through material science was becoming, for the intelligent, almost a fad, things supersensuous began to occupy the minds of scientific men.

Of the Society for Psychological Research, I have only this to say: that, for the modern mind, it puts the whole subject of the spiritual world in a light that challenges attention. It claims that there exists a means of communication between the plane before death and the plane after it. When some of the most highly trained philosophical and scientific minds in Europe and America support the declaration that intercourse between the so-called living and the so-called dead is possible, it is time for those of us who are seeking proof of a better world than this to pay attention. Of the most celebrated of these men, the names are familiar to the world. The records of their experience are before the public, and, in some cases, have had a wide reading. My main purpose in referring to them now is to indicate a movement on a widespread scale before passing to my personal experience as a detail.

For, after all, in a discussion such as this,

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personal experience carries weight from the sheer fact of its being personal. Though not of necessity convincing, it records, at least, an element in one man's life. I shall venture, therefore, to tell the little I know at first hand, though I should like to repeat—what I have said by way of prelude—that my own approach to the subject has been entirely through what I may call the logical extension of the Christian revelation.

That is to say, I believe that if, according to the statement of the New Testament, Jesus Christ has abolished death, then it is abolished. Not that he could have done away with what had previously been a fact, but that He had proved death to be no more than a figment of the human senses, always easily deluded. From this, it was a natural step for me to go on to viewing death as an enhancement of existence, free from such accompaniments as grief, fear, or separation. The plea for the legitimacy of sorrow put forward by the human senses—that while death may be a gain to those who pass onward, it must be a loss to those who stay behind—I found myself unable to admit. A gain for one must be a gain for all. To believe that profit for one

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could be loss for another would be to institute a principle of divinely sanctioned topsyturvydom. One could not on Easter day sing alleluias over the abolishing of death, and live in the shadow of its poignancy all the rest of the year.

If death was abolished, Life was a grand unity. And if Life was a grand unity, then communion was its expression. I had repeated from my childhood the formula that I believed "in the communion of saints," though I had never seen an outward sign of that fellowship or known anyone to whom this communion was more than theoretic. But a communion which existed only in the words of one side, without token or response from the other, began to seem to me not a communion. (Since writing the above, a spiritual correspondent, once a young Harvard professor, has said: "The communion of saints is the recognition on your part of the outstretched arms which for eons of years you have passed by. The communion has always been on this side, even when you were all blind.") Surely the voice of communion should be communication. If Life was universal, then Intelligence must be universal,

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and if Intelligence was universal, then utterance must be its instinct. That this instinct should be forever balked I found it harder and harder to credit, especially when the windows of heaven were being opened for the Unseen to pour us out what we chose to call mechanical blessings. Between spiritual and mechanical, I could see no difference in essence, since all were the gifts of Life.

Asking only for intelligible communication between the two spheres, I had little interest in such psychic phenomena as the moving of pieces of furniture, the transmission of objects through the air, or the making of strange noises. However little these manifestations could be explained by known natural laws, I disliked to think of them as spiritual indications. But when messages of a simpler and more straightforward kind began to come to myself, I asked some questions as to a séance of the type to which I am referring, described by Sir Conan Doyle, with replies that have made me more tolerant.

“We never wish to terrify,” was the answer, “yet we seek to make ourselves known.”

“Do people on your plane,” was my next

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question, "ever manifest themselves in material form?"

"There might be great exceptions, but they are rare. There must be a strong reason for their appearing to those who can see them with physical eyes."

"But is not your use of this pencil a return to the material?"

"The guiding of this pencil is not material. I do it with my will."

"Then one may take such manifestations as those described by Conan Doyle as emanating from your plane?"

"Yes; but I should not do that."

The inference I have drawn from this is that a world densely material and unbelieving has to be moved by such phenomena as will puzzle or astound it. There is no other way of getting its attention. When higher and simpler means are open, those who wish to speak make use of them for preference.

But to return to my own conviction that a communion of saints must imply communication. Along this line, the first thing that came to my notice was Sir Oliver Lodge's book, "Raymond." This I read with the mixture of wonder and dissatisfaction which

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I suppose was common to most people who did not altogether reject it as the work of a disordered mind. But on this subject, too, when communications began to come to me freely, I asked some questions, with replies that may be not without interest.

“Raymond is in a different phase from mine,” writes the friend I have quoted above, and of whom I shall have more to say presently, “and what he says is undoubtedly true. Reports vary, perhaps, in that, our life being so much a state of mind, the point of view and the desires can greatly affect the facts themselves, altering events to coincide with wishes—within limitations. Planes are divided into phases, but the change from phase to phase is indefinite and can occur at irregular times, according to growth of spirit and degree of gifts.”

“Then phases with you would correspond somewhat to countries with us?”

“No sense of separation—all one in time and space—and no essential difference as of nationality, though people of the same gifts and interests and the same spiritual degree often make a homogeneous whole.”

“Do people who go from here in a very

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imperfect condition tend to cling together and form groups of their own?"

"They are grouped according to development and gifts, and are given leaders. Whatever their minds and natural desires most tend to is first developed; then a general development must follow, and specializing is then allowed, with a constant growth of spirit and widening of interests."

"Then Raymond's account and yours might be taken somewhat as we should take the different reports of travelers who come to us, say from London or Paris, each describing what might seem to us like a different city."

"Just that; different aspects of the same truth."

I said here that I supposed the conditions Raymond described were those which the next plane might naturally present to a young fighting man going over fresh from modern conditions and the army.

"Yes; different conditions to suit different desires."

"If I remember rightly, he speaks of factories."

"Nothing is manufactured here. The fac-

ories might easily be called up by his desire to see familiar things. There is much work done here, but no labor.”

“I think he mentions tennis and tobacco.”

“We sometimes play games; and the tobacco is quite natural, although the pleasure in it passes quickly, as it is not a thing of innate beauty.”

“A sign on Raymond’s part of the young fighting man’s spiritual immaturity?”

“Yes; like children playing with toys.”

“Then on your plane you see clearly the value of the addition which each individual who comes to you brings with him?”

“Yes; and you would each bring something to contribute to the joy of others—something here which had not been here before. Each individual has an atmosphere in which his personality can be expressed. To use a figure of natural form, it is as though each one had a house or museum decorated and adorned to suit his fancy, and to exhibit beauty as it appears after having passed through the crystallizing element of his peculiar mind. We have here a sort of spiritual exposition, in which the products of each one’s gifts and desires are set forth in their beauty

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—it being understood that space and substance play no part in the spiritual form of grace and strength which are the components of beauty. Many things are visualized to us which with you are merely apprehended as ideas. Again you must forget *substance*, and all thought of objects occupying space. The nearest I can come to it in verbal expression is that your desire to write and R.'s vision of future world-commerce can be detected by us as an atmosphere of peculiar personal beauty radiating from the individual."

"Then you see the value of the individual, to a degree out of the question for us?"

"The diamond has a thousand flashes and reflections latent in its depths. You see a few of them when the sun strikes it. Here our diamonds glow to their fullness—and the radiance would be impossible for you to apprehend."

A few months after reading "Raymond," I read "The Seven Purposes," by Margaret Cameron.

Though this may not be the place in which to record my own conviction as to the authenticity of its message, I think it right to do so, for the reason that it clears the way to what I

shall have to say later on. What little doubt I had after reading the book vanished on seeing the author at work. While I have not the space in which to describe the method of transmission, I am obliged to declare that, in my judgment, no physical agency could have wielded the pencil held to the paper in the lightest possible way and writing apparently of its own accord. For two hours at a stretch, on two occasions, it worked with rapid and tireless activity, answering my questions on some of the most momentous topics of the day with a lucidity, precision, and instantaneousness to which, it seems to me, no purely earthly mind could have been equal.

While in these answers there is much I should like to quote, I prefer, as being more to my present purpose, to cite a passage in "The Seven Purposes" in which Frederick, a young man who passed on in Detroit at the age of twenty-seven, one of the speakers in the book, makes a special appeal to his father.

"We are nearer to you than you are to each other, dad, and we can prove it if you will let go of yourselves and take hold of us. We want to come to you. We do come to you. We try and try to tell you that there is nothing to grieve about, nothing to dread.

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Only love, and hope, and growth, and beauty of complete reunion. But we can't do it alone. We must have a free heart, a free mind, a free hope to come into. Give us that, and we will show you that we are more truly your own— not your own flesh and blood, but your own purpose and force, which was one in the beginning and will inevitably be one in the end. We want to make it one now. Don't you, dad? Won't you try to let the bars down and take us in? We'll come, and we'll be happier than you've ever been in all your life yet, because the Eternal Purpose is Unity, and we can begin it right here and now, if you will join with us, and be part with us, as we with you, of the glorious and happy and irresistible movement toward the great end—which, after all, is not an end, but an eternal and infinite growth toward bigger things."

Is it possible to hear in these words anything but the genuine, loving pleading of an actually Living Voice?

II

I come now to the messages given directly to myself. They came so simply that I fear the very simplicity will make it difficult for my reader to take them as authentic. That at first I did not myself take them as authentic I must freely confess. Held back from doing so by all the questions and doubts which the

reader of this page will understand, it is only by degrees, after much that is too personal to quote has been given me, that I find myself coming to acceptance as my only reasonable course.

It was before the first of my two interviews with the author of "The Seven Purposes," before I had seen any of the so-called automatic writing or knew exactly what it was. Nevertheless, the topic being in the air, I was talking of it one day with a young girl whom I know intimately, and whom, for the sake of identification, I shall call Jennifer. Though intelligent and in the early twenties, she knew no more of this writing than I did myself, and much less than I did of psychic interests and phenomena. That her mind was as free from prepossessions on the subject as a human mind can possibly be I can truthfully affirm; and I must ask my reader to believe me when I say that fake or trickery on her part is absolutely out of the question. Moreover, it will be evident from the replies already given to my questions that no young girl, whatever her intentions, could be equal to formulating such responses without a minute's hesitation, even if, which is most im-

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probable, she was capable of doing it on reflection.

Suddenly she said, "I think I could do that writing." A minute later, she was seated with a sheet of blank paper before her and a pencil held lightly to the page.

Almost instantly the pencil began to move slowly, and as if with difficulty, forming the words in a handwriting unlike Jennifer's own: "I can tell you many things in time." After something additional, but to similar purport, this was signed by a name which we took, at first, to be that of the girl's mother, who is still alive. When, however, the signature was given a second time and in full, it proved to be that of Jennifer's great-grandmother, who died some eighty years ago.

Other names were speedily written, chiefly of relatives, though sometimes of friends, and now and then of strangers. Each one said a few kindly things, not of much importance. The impression they gave was that of a group, of which each member took the pencil in turn, the manner and handwriting of each being different from that of every other. Here I should say that while some traces of Jennifer's own handwriting always remain,

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the main characteristics change with the change of speaker. Now the writing is bold and strong, now small and delicate; for one, the pencil will move cautiously as if feeling out the words; for another, it dashes eagerly, as if the writer were anxious to say much. Always the sense of a personality behind the movement of the pencil is as strong as it is when you speak with someone at the telephone.

In all this there was nothing convincing, of course; and the chief effect upon ourselves was to make us wonder and question, as people do in the presence of what they are unable to explain. Jennifer herself could not tell how the pencil moved. At times, the force was applied to her hand; at times, to the pencil itself; at times, she knew a word or two in advance what was to be said; at times she expected one thing when the pencil wrote another. That there was no conscious participation on her own side she was sure. There remained unconscious participation, and to that we ascribed the numerous changes in style, manner, and personification till the theory became too difficult to sustain.

Among the fifteen or twenty names in-

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scribed during the first experiments was a surname to which we paid little or no attention, knowing no one who would answer to it "on the other side." All messengers know the phenomenon called "interference"—the intrusion of what seems like undeveloped personalities, flippant or inconsequent—and I took the persistence of this name to be such an example. When the name was written, I would ask the writer kindly to withdraw, so that we could communicate with our friends.

But after a few efforts, to which I failed to respond, it wrote itself clearly, with a word appended indicating a profession. It was as if the words: "Talbot—Chemist" had been written, and one knew of a famous chemist of that name. For the sake of clarity I shall use the appellation, it being remembered that it is fictitious.

"It can't be Henry Talbot, the *great* chemist?"

The answer assured me that it was, though bringing me no more conviction than I had felt with regard to those who had spoken hitherto.

Of the first conversations thus held, I have

no record. Impressive though I found them, they seemed to me to belong too much to the world of the impossible to be matter for preservation. It was only after the third time that I began to keep a copy, and in what I now quote I change not so much as a word—except that once I suppress a redundant “the”—even the punctuation being almost as given in the original. For the sake of condensation, I do omit some of my own questions where the answers form a whole, and sometimes I keep to the unity of subject, even though the answers are to questions asked on different days. All the conversations during those first days were spasmodic and irregular, as they are apt to be when the dominating motive is curiosity. It was the light shed one day which would induce me to pick up the same theme on the next.

On what I think was the fifth or sixth occasion of his signing his name, I began by asking why irresponsible people should intervene in the writing, in the manner referred to above.

“It is partly your lack of faith, and partly the desire of unknown people making efforts to communicate with their people through

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you. Your lack of faith gives them the opening. They have few ways of coming closer to their dear ones. They do not seek to harm."

"Have they been human beings?"

"Yes; they are always human, but even the animals are that."

"Someone has told us that on your plane the animals have speech."

"The barrier of language has ceased. Thought makes all in common. They have a much larger development ahead, and much good work. They are intelligent. The ant and the bee are far ahead of many of the larger animals. They help and direct the others, being on a higher footing."

I asked if it was wrong for us to destroy what we call animal life.

"You can *never* destroy life. Life is the absolute power which overrules all else. There can be no cessation. It is impossible."

"Then death does not really interfere with life?"

"You make death an impenetrable fog, while it is a mere golden mist, torn easily aside by the shafts of faith, and revealing life as not only continuous but as not cut in two by a

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great change.* I cannot express myself as I wish. . . . It is more like leaving prison for freedom and happiness. Not that your present life lacks joy; it is all joy, but you have to fight with imperfections. Here, we have to struggle only with lack of development. There is no evil—only different degrees of spirit.”

“Is the lack of development with which people arrive on your plane due to what we call sin on this?”

“They come over with the evil, as it were, cut out, and leaving blanks in their souls. These have by degrees to be filled with good. No evil endures, because it has not life.”

“Then no longing for evil is carried over to your plane?”

“No; there are only blanks. It is a handicap—as a man with one arm, no hands, etc., but soon becomes better.”

“As if a man with no hands——”

“Can grow them. As long as a living thing is used by you, it does not grow into our atmosphere. You cut a tree, build a

* This is the only place at which the writing is difficult to read, but I think I have deciphered it correctly.

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house; the house burns, and you at last discard the ashes. Then the tree comes in its fullness to us. The life is there; the form matters not; it returns to the most beautiful.”

“Does any life originate on your plane?”

“There is new life, but not by birth.”

“Then birth is not essential to existence?”

“Not to existence—merely incarnation.”

“Are old age and decay inevitable on this plane?”

“There should be no change in the grown body but an increase in life.”

“Then senility and decrepitude are not our natural inheritance?”

“Man wished and created. You are all beautiful, and can become so; but it cannot be by concentration on this thought alone. Our only beauty-treatment is spiritual growth.”

Here I asked if he could give me any explanation of what we call the subconscious personality.

“The personality is to the subconscious personality what Boston” (this part of the conversation took place in Boston) “is to the universe—eternity develops both—a star in

the heavens.” This having been written in the way a man dashes in a few notes, the pencil rested for some twenty seconds, as if the speaker were thinking out the simplest way of expressing himself. “Imagine an infinite tape measure in constant motion and progression—more of the tape appearing every instant. It is the newest part of your self-apprehended personality with which I deal, but the tape unrolls itself *ad infinitum*, and each day and hour finds you in command of a greater extent of power—a ground-basis of potential character. There is no division or mystery connected with it. Those who are best enlightened and use their power to advantage progress more rapidly, thus developing the subconscious—as you choose to call it. But there is nothing really *sub* about it, if you use to its fullness the power within. You may perhaps feel the urge of the tape pouring itself forth, and bear therewith the knowledge of coming increase of life. That is the nearest you can come to perfection, because perfection implies completion. . . . Perfection in completion is of eternity.”

“Does education on this plane improve

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a man's chances when he reaches yours?"

"What he has kept and developed is what he is when he reaches here. We must then unwrap the talents hid in the napkin and develop to their fullness the unused gifts of God."

I inquired if greatness on this plane carried over to the next and was greatness of any kind there.

"The sense of greatness—of doing things on the imperial scale—endures, and is in itself one of our greatest gifts, however misused it may have been in your realm. Large vision is a thing to be prized, and the misuse of it brings great anguish, for the failure is of the same scale as the gift. It can, however, be used by its possessor here when he recovers from his agony. It gives an advantage to the growing soul, enabling it to assimilate more rapidly the truth which, to some, is almost blinding in its extent and beauty."

I asked if the advantages possessed on this plane by sovereigns and others in high position were of any help to them on that plane.

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“Education does much to increase scope, and kings have the advantage of training and habit to accustom them to large ideas. They sometimes therefore attain this gift, but my writing applies to *all* men who see things on a lordly scale. . . . Ambition is our expression of motive power—*steam*. If men have been given this impetus and use it for their good, they gain greatly whether with you or us. Those who have abused the motive power churn their spirits into torment and friction. It is the devouring flame which the ancients called the fire of hell.”

“Would anybody, however great a sinner, be received on your plane with what we used to be told was the wrath of God?”

“He would be like one terribly maimed, and would be treated with special love, because of the unavoidable spiritual anguish he must endure.”

Referring to certain quotations he had made from the New Testament, in passages I have not given, I asked if the Bible had a value on that plane similar to what it has on this.

“It is your nearest point to us—your

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Himalayas—Mount Everest—think of the name.”

“So that our highest conception falls immeasurably short of your reality?”

“The highest is correct, but is only the root of a superstructure infinite in its beauty, and requiring infinity to understand in its fullness. It is created by the thought of God, of which we are expressions. We are the prismatic colors of His glory. As goodness is reflected in us—and goodness is God—we give forth God again. Note the difference in colors; we do not all reflect all of Him, nor do we do it in the same way. *Les nuances se détachent nettement, mais se confondent dans une harmonie infinie.*” (The shades of color are clearly distinct from each other, but mingled in an infinite harmony.)

Becoming impressed by these replies and growing used to the idea that a personality was behind them, I asked if it was possible that Jennifer’s own thought entered into the writing.

“No; it does not come through her, but through my watching. I am delegated to this work, as are several of us. Most of us, however, are occupied with work here, which

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is the reason why they speak less freely. Their minds are turned toward other things. Those who welcome and those who prepare speak most fluently."

"Then your task is specially in preparation?"

"Yes; preparation—enlightenment—holding the lamps. That is my specialty, for which I was prepared while yet being below."

"Is the present the most propitious of all times for direct communication between your plane and ours?"

"It has been possible at various times—in the days of Moses, Christ, Joan of Arc, and now, but never as easy as at present. You are reaching up and we are leaning down."

"What exactly is a plane?"

"The plane is an atmosphere in which we move. It is not a locality. We can move out of it by growth, and back if the need urges us. It is a state of being—but progressive."

As on several occasions he had used the word "Christ." I asked if he meant the Sonship of God in general, or Jesus, the individual.

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“Both; but the Sonship has only been perfected in Him as yet.”

“What is He doing on your plane?”

“A higher work. You see, He has no evil or sickness to combat; only faith to lead upward. He is our ruler—but there is no ruler—our leader, yet not by command. . . . Jesus is our sun by which we regulate all acts; our sovereign, yet our beloved.”

I asked if the fact that the narrative of the life of Jesus on this plane was of a time long past and of a vanished civilization made it in any way out of date for our acceptance.

“It *is* true that the annals and spirit of the time have constituted obstacles, or rather hindrances, to its clearer understanding; but that is a minor detail, and should not for a moment overshadow the Light of the World—indeed, it cannot.”

“Does He live as a person on your plane?”

“Yes; He is a person; but more of one than anyone of us.”

“Can you hold communication with Him?”

“We can do so always.”

Reverting to what he had said of the power on that plane of visualizing ideas which were

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purely abstract to us, I asked if when they actually beheld such conceptions as Justice, Mercy, Love, the fact corresponded to what we spoke of as "seeing God."

"It is visualizing a part of God. There is much later on. Even we here cannot conceive of it."

"Does the seeing God in this sense correspond in any way to our seeing man?"

"He is not like a man, but must have all the attributes of man—but this I cannot explain."

I asked if the speaker minded my making personal inquiries.

"No; but do not play tricks. They hurt us."

I asked if such communication as we were having had anything in common with the talking by wireless between Ireland and Nova Scotia, of which I had just been reading.

"Waves are rhythm, and rhythm is harmony. All communication is music, and music is communication. Music is the highest communication; it expresses more than words—thoughts in harmony, emotions too fragile for language. *Les nuances vagues, mais non*

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moins distinctes.” (Shades of meaning subtle, but not less distinct.)

Expressing a fear lest I should be using confidential communications as literary copy I got this reply:

“Literature is the sun; music is the water; sculpture is the earth; dancing is life, and painting is the soul. These in their purity cannot be evil. . . . I have spread a table in your sight. Whatever is on it is for your use. Take freely and give to others. They hunger for this food.”

III

This, the reader will probably say, is not much; but it is all for which I have the space. Moreover, it is enough to give a glimpse of what some of us yearn for so intensely, a more satisfactory world. Much of what I hold in reserve will be used in an attempt to construct that world, not according to my ideas but in the language of those who are actually living in it. In my next article, “The New Heaven,” I shall confine myself to the transcription of what those on the next plane have sent over, anything of mine being no

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more than the effort to elucidate what may seem difficult or obscure.

It will be noticed that I speak as if the fact that we are beginning to catch the speech of the other side of the communion of saints had already been conceded. I do so for the sake of conciseness in writing, fully acknowledging everyone's right to draw his own conclusions. For myself, I have not drawn conclusions so much as I have grown toward them. The sense, which comes with the actual experience, of talking with a living personage of transcendent knowledge, love, and beauty is impossible to convey through the medium of the written page.

I know there is a reader for whom the dialogue, so to call it, which I have copied from my records will have neither significance nor value. That must be as it happens. It is no part of my purpose to try to convert anyone.

There is another who will think that though the answers to my questions contain some suggestive and more imaginative material, the psychologist can dispose of it with an easy stroke. Admitting, he will quote the psychologist as saying, that it is im-

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possible for any young girl of the dancing-age to invent these replies at a moment's notice, it is obvious that she draws them from one of two sources. Either she gets them out of her own subconscious mind, or by telepathic intuition she reads them in the mind of the person whose questions she transmits.

To the one or the other of the last two theories I held as long as I could. I must now leave it to the reader to decide for himself what explanation he finds most tenable. For my own part, I choose the easiest. That any young creature, with the tastes of the average happy, high-spirited American girl and no others, should have such spiritual wealth strewn on the surface of the mind, subconscious or otherwise, puts, for me, too great a strain on probability. That, on the other hand, she should read in a flash what is so far out of sight in me that I myself have no knowledge of it is a miracle such as the psychologist will hardly ask us to believe in. I am thrown back, therefore, on the conviction of a living, loving, glorified personality, eager to tell us some of the things we so ardently crave to know.

As for Jennifer herself, there is about

her nothing of the mystic, the mediumistic, the spiritualistic, or the morbid, not any more than there is about a flower. It is impossible for anyone to be simpler, or more normal, or to take the task of transmitting these messages more as a matter of course. I can compare her only to a window of pure glass, through which the sunshine streams into a room because there is nothing to shut it out.

But I begin to wonder if there are not many such windows, already opened, or to be opened soon, all round about us. Those whose light comes through this particular crystal encourage us to think so. Theirs is nothing strange or special, they tell us, in the exercise of such a gift. Its requirements are chiefly faith, perseverance, and the highest purity of heart we can bring to it. As recently as the reign of Henry VII, of England, a glass window was a rare addition to any palace in Europe; and now the poorest cottage has one. If, then, the light is shining in our darkness, and, at long last, our darkness is beginning to comprehend it, may it not be that the new heaven and the new earth in which, as the Master foretold, "they

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shall speak with new tongues," is coming to the hearts of all? Is it not possible, too, that in every home on which the shadow of death is now resting there may soon be, as for Daniel in his exile, "a window open toward Jerusalem?"

To the young and vigorous among my readers, who have all the delights of this plane still to explore, this hope may not mean much. But there are others. Some are care-worn; some are sick; some are old; some are tired; some are just serious-minded, while a vast multitude may be reckoned as having "hearts failing them for fear and for looking for those things that are coming on the earth." Among these, doubtless, there will be one here and there ready to lift up his eyes unto the hills—to the Himalayas—to Mount Everest—and beyond—where growth takes the place of conflict, where neglected and undiscovered gifts are brought to light, where the diamond glows to its fullness, and we all become, in our different degrees, the prismatic colors of God's glory.

THE NEW HEAVEN

THE NEW HEAVEN

IN the following, I speak as if the fact that messages can come from one plane of existence to the other were conceded by the reader. This I do to avoid wearisome arguments and repetitions. Propaganda or preaching has no place in my object. That is attained when I lay before my readers material which to me seems beautiful and strange, leaving it to the individual to make of it what he will.

The actual process by which the messages come is of the simplest. Imagine yourself sitting in a room with a young girl—a young woman, if you like—in the early twenties. She has the habits and attainments of the average American girl who has seen something of the world, with the usual tastes for the theater, the opera, and other social diversions. She is well read in a discursive way, but she has not been to college, has skimmed but one book on philosophy, while of psychic phenomena and literature she knows ab-

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solutely nothing. She is aware that there are such interests, just as she knows that there are South American politics, and has had the same degree of contact with the one as with the other.

Suddenly Jennifer, which is what, for the purpose of these papers, I have named her, says apropos of the subject of automatic writing, of which she has never seen an example, and has heard of only within a few weeks, "I think I could do it."

In this way, the messages began. They came at first from a number of people, but settled down by degrees to one chief speaker, whom, to avoid the use of a name well known throughout America and Europe, and of which I do not feel authorized to avail myself, I call Henry Talbot. As the interest of these papers is entirely in the nature of the message, the exact name of the speaker is of less importance.

I gather that, on his part, he has tried many channels through which to approach us with his teaching, and, for reasons at which I can only guess, finds Jennifer the most responsive. "A loved and loving transmitter," is what he calls her. "Her mind is the cor-

ridor to mine," he says of her elsewhere. Of what she says of him, now that the communion is growing familiar, I will have to speak more at length in a paper on the laws governing this form of intercourse. That we are profoundly ignorant of the most obvious natural laws is one of his assertions; so that it can hardly be surprising if we should not know the alphabet of a language the existence of which we have so persistently denied.

The nearest parallel I can find to these conversations between Henry Talbot and myself is that of speaking through another person at a telephone, with a third person at the end of the wire. Jennifer sits at my end, I put my questions to her; they are heard and answered, while she writes the replies on the scribbling-block, which, in most houses, lies near the receiver. In the whole process there is nothing more mysterious than that.

It will be noticed that I bring nothing forward in the nature of evidence, for apart from the factor of sweet reasonableness in the messages themselves, I have no evidence to bring. The question of evidence has, however, been gone into pretty thoroughly elsewhere. If such writing as Jennifer's were a new

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thing in the world, if this were the only example of it, or if there were not others occupied with the evidential side of the subject, I might make an attempt to verify the source of what comes to me. As it is, I limit myself to saying that it comes. Apart from punctuation, and some arranging of the material for the sake of condensation, I change not a jot or tittle.

I

Probably the most spontaneous thought that occurs to any of us in thinking of another plane of existence is as to how we are to get there. That migration is so fraught with fear that many prefer to think that there is no migration at all, that one falls asleep never to wake again. The majority, however, look forward to being transferred somewhere—through something. It is that something which the human mind has always represented to itself as terrifying. It has been described by every figure that can inspire dread. The dark river—the leap into the unknown—the Valley of the Shadow of Death—the last agony—*in articulo mortis!* We hear the rattling of the throat, the nailing of the coffin,

the falling of the clods in the very syllables, and, odd to say, vast hordes of us get a thrill of morbid pleasure from the sound.

Christianity, as commonly taught and accepted, has done nothing to mitigate this horror; it has rather utilized it as a warning. Its last prayers and last sacraments strike, as a rule, the same alarming note as the passing bell that used to be tolled when a man was supposed to be dying. Its funeral services, often rich in a dirgeful beauty, would depress the most joyous heart.

The process of passing being conceived of by many of us in terms of so much terror, a word from one who has been through it may be not without some tonic effect. It is still Henry Talbot, from whom I have quoted so much and shall continue to quote more, who is my authority. The only liberty I take with his words is to divide them into paragraphs for the easier comprehension of the reader.

“The manner of going over varies with individuals. Of this you may be sure; the suffering is all *on your side* of the change. The arrival here is sometimes bewildering, but never without joy.

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“Those who are best prepared see the beauty before they pass over, and leave you with a serene anticipation.

“Those who come in violence are shocked by the loveliness, and as I say:

“The unprepared suffer from handicaps, and undergo spiritual anguish of remorse. Their feelings are best compared with those of the prodigal son on his return to his father’s house; but everything is done to relieve their sorrow, and point to the future and present rather than to the past.

“The treatment of the newly come varies in kind with the individual, but never in love.”

One gathers from this that on that side the changes involved in death are made not only easy but beautiful. That those who are best prepared do catch a glimpse of that beauty in advance most of us have guessed in looking at the faces of some who have made the transition. The phenomenon by which old features become young, and tired lines are smoothed out in peace, is familiar to us all. The ecstasy—the word is not too strong—with which little children in passing on will hold up their hands to some “lovely lady” who comes to receive them has comforted

millions of mothers left behind. I do not emphasize these details; the physiologist has methods of explaining them away. I mean only that they seem to corroborate what our teacher on the other side tells us, and there can be no harm in taking them in that consoling sense.

Of those who go over through violence, he writes as follows:

“In reply to the question which you asked last night about the explanation of death in regard to catastrophes such as the *Lusitania* or epidemics, I must beg you to consider carefully the fact that these disasters are brought about by the act of man. Even in case of the *Titanic*, which was caused by an iceberg, the rate of the ship's progress through the fog was the act of man. In cases where these accidents occur from natural causes, such as the elements, the persons who die do so because you all believe the violence which they have suffered to be essentially fatal. Likewise in the case of epidemics. There is no reason why a person cannot be under water for a long time and yet live; but you have willed to believe drowning to be the inevitable consequence of such experience.

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Persons who die violent deaths do so because of the ignorance which you still entertain regarding natural laws. They are killed by your belief that life has become impossible to them. They are thus hastened to the change of spheres, but are made welcome and joyful as though their arrival had been at the appointed time. The deaths of violence make it the more necessary for all to concentrate on their appointed work in your sphere, lest this man-created interruption should cut them off too soon. It cannot cut them off in such a way as to make the accomplishment of their work impossible. The work started in your sphere is finished in this, and mankind—of its own act—is the loser.”

Thus a young soldier who has been torn from his chosen task of teaching, healing, building, or whatever it may have been, to give his life in the Bois de Belleau or on the Marne, goes on in that sphere with what had to be abandoned in this; and the only losers are ourselves. We needed his work for as long a time as he had been charged to give it to the world. That we—the human race—reached a frenzied crisis at which we demanded his life rather than his natural con-

tribution to our good makes no difference to him. He continues to offer his contribution—only, we shall not receive it.

Of those who go over unprepared, I cannot do better than quote again Henry Talbot's words which I gave previously.

QUESTION. Is anyone, however great a sinner, received on your plane with what we used to be told was the wrath of God?

ANSWER. He would be like one terribly maimed, and would be treated with special love, because of the spiritual anguish he must endure.

In this connection we find Frederick Gaylord, in Margaret Cameron's book, "The Seven Purposes," working with those who had—

"let their lowest tendencies be their guiding force. They were men who were very unhappy, because they had left the world before they were ready, and did not know what this life meant.

"'Had they recently gone over?' he was asked.

"'Yes; not very long on this side. They were so bewildered that they thought they were in some kind of dream that they could not wake from. They had been sick, but, not long enough to let them get any idea of death, or life after death, so they were sorry to come over.'"

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These, it will be noted, were men who had "let their lowest tendencies be their guiding force." Unhappily, as we know, there are many of them. It is comforting to think, however, that the majority of men and women have some preparation. I am speaking here not of "preparation" in the distinctively Christian sense, but of all that training through love, self-sacrifice, kindness, and duty to which all but a relatively few of us are subjected or willingly subject ourselves. Living must be the test not creed. I have often said of a friend of mine, who would probably describe himself as a free-thinker, and perhaps as an atheist, that he is one of the half-dozen "best Christians" I have ever known. We are at liberty to think, then, of all but the very depraved—whose cases are generally pathological—as more or less prepared for what they find, and ready to enter into it. "The arrival here is sometimes bewildering," Henry Talbot says above, "but never without joy." "Emphasis is never laid upon the past," he writes elsewhere, "always upon the future. They know from the first that they will grow." Suffering merely as suffering seems to have no place on that

plane. All anguish would appear to spring from the sense of having hitherto ignored so much of love and beauty.

II

The first vivid impression which those who speak to us across the separation of planes give of themselves is, I think, that of superabundance of vitality. Their interests and activities surpass all of which we can form an idea. It is a case, not merely of having life but of having it more—most—abundantly. Capacities so deeply buried in us now that we have no suspicion that we possess them seem to be brought out, while new capacities are superadded. It was a man whom I had known on this plane as severe, taciturn, grim, who answered when I asked about his work, "We do the flowers." A less probable occupation for *him* would never have occurred to me. Speaking directly of this, Henry Talbot says:

"The simpler souls are given simple occupations not so much because they are incapable of others as because they have gifts which need exercise in that special way. Many of you are 'gifted,' but do not realize

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it, because you have limited your idea of gifts. There are those who have the sympathy which qualifies them to deal with the flowers, tending their spiritual beauty and development."

We may take this, then, as an instance of an unused faculty being unwrapped from the napkin and exercised not only for the common good but for the special advantage of the owner. "All tasks are temporary," Henry Talbot writes further, "and are changed in accordance with development."

"What do you call work?" is a question asked of Frederick Gaylord.

"Conscious development of spiritual forces," is his answer.

There appears to be no other work than that, and that, we infer, covers everything. The plant, the animal, the human being, and the being that has never been incarnated all share in it. Properly understood, there are no forces that are not spiritual, even on this plane. "You are living our life, with the limitations of the flesh," Henry Talbot writes. "The symbol restrains you, but your life is no less real." It is the beginning of a progress always upward into the spiritual,

and of which "the conscious development of spiritual forces" becomes more and more the recognized aim. All powers are organized toward that end, even when they seem to contribute to it only indirectly.

That seeming lack of directness springs apparently from our limited comprehension of what is spiritual. We have put the spiritual in the life of this plane into a kind of bulkhead compartment, where it is separated from life's other elements. As a matter of fact, it is the essence of life's essence. The word from which it is derived, "*spiritus*," means neither more nor less than "breath." The spiritual is the breath of all action not only on that plane but on this. The difference is that, on that plane, everyone perceives it. It is what, I take it, imparts such astonishing and inexhaustible vigor.

And this vigor goes naturally into work. The variety of tasks is not the least among the wonders of the new condition, though I have space to give but a few of them as instances. "We are hoping to write books on law," says a young Harvard professor, who went over some thirty years ago. "He has been working with the rules governing

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water," we are told of another man. "I am studying beauty in new forms," a well-known architect has recently written of himself. "She is watching with the babies," is the word concerning a young mother. "She makes the fun," was the answer to a question about a relative. "He does a great work here," is the reply to an inquiry about a former banker who loved horses, "two works. He helps in the organization of exchange, and he plays with the horses and develops them."

One would say that there is no such conception there as that of idleness. Each individual being considered an expression of the ever-working God, who has called into existence nothing for which there is not a definite need, finds his task awaiting him. What a man has made of himself on this plane, according to Henry Talbot, is what he is when he reaches that one. These assets being credited, his neglected or unsuspected gifts are then brought to light, so that he may work his inheritance to the full.

And in helping a man to make the most of himself the procedure would seem to be systematic. There are what we should call four

stages. The newcomer is first graded according to previous development and gifts, and put under the guidance of a leader. In the second place his natural tastes and inclinations are allowed play, after which comes the third stage of general unfolding. When that is completed the individual is allowed to do special work, with a constant growth of spirit and widening of interests.*

The point I should like to see noticed here is that each one is trained along the lines of his own least resistance. There is no forcing of the soul into hard or unaccustomed ways; nothing alien to encounter, nothing on which to break a rebellious will. Each one is met as the possessor of gifts identical with no other gifts, and therefore to be cared for with infinite solicitude.

“Each of us,” I said to Henry Talbot, “brings to you then his own peculiar gifts which no one has brought before him.”

“Yes; no one comes in without bringing beauty and power and glory of his own. Beauty is infinite, or it would not be beauty. We ourselves grow both in gifts and appre-

* See quotation in *Abolishing of Death*.

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ciation as a baby grows into a man. The change is gradual but unending, and power is of eternity."

Nothing is more touching than the way in which repressed longings seemed to be brought out and satisfied. "No wish of ours is ever left ungratified," Henry Talbot wrote, in reply to a question of mine as to whether they enjoyed privacy or spent their existence in one vast publicity; but the answer goes beyond the immediate query and embraces everything.

"I am a mother now," wrote a woman who had never been married, and in whom we supposed the earthly springs of maternity to have dried up. This being difficult for us to understand, she said later, when we asked for a message to a young man relative whom she had dearly loved, "I have my own boys here." A third person threw light on this by saying of her: "She works among soldiers. They all love her." It began to come to us then that motherhood is a higher mystery than anything connected with the earthly processes of birth. These doubtless form a symbol of a wider relation in which all women may have a share. The motherhood that on

this plane was refused to her whom I have mentioned, and for which we who knew her never supposed she craved, is evidently being offered to her now to the fulfillment of all desire.

The line of least resistance was plainly followed, too, in the case of a man we knew, a woodsman to the core. "He has gone on," we were told of him; "*the birds loved him.*" Of a woman who in this sphere was so discouraged that she took her own life, the word passed to us is; "She is the spirit of joy; she talks to the down-hearted on your plane." "Am I not a musician?—*Est-ce que je ne suis pas un musicien?*" was the response of a great singer, who passed on a few years ago, when I ventured to inquire about his work. Of a well-known teacher here, I asked if she was teaching there. "She studies to teach," was the answer. Of still another teacher, of whom the inquiry is made in "The Seven Purposes," the information is given: "'He is instructing many of us. . . . He has learned more quickly than most do because he is truly sincere and had cultivated his ground well. Now he is still a leader of thought, and his instruction is dynamic.'" Of a sculp-

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tress mentioned in the same book it is said: “‘She is working with a development of the purpose of production, which is the foundation that underlay her work there. She is producing force by developing the undeveloped producers.’” “‘My work,’” writes a business man, also quoted by Margaret Cameron, “‘lies principally with business men on your plane. We are much concerned about the lack of co-operation among persons of constructive tendencies, and my own job is to apply this force we cannot fully explain to you in any way that will influence men or women toward co-operation,’”

III

Of this line of least resistance it would be easy to multiply examples, but the foregoing will be enough to show the breadth of the basis on which the wishes are met. This is done, it would appear, not merely from an impulse of tenderness but from a sense of values. Clear in the mind of all is the knowledge that each one who enters that realm is a new recruit whose aid is perceptible in spite of the magnitude of the army. Each is the occupant of a place which has never yet been

filled, in spite of the numbers who have preceded him. Each is worth not merely what he is, but all he has it in him to become.

“You should see your mute, inglorious Miltons here!” the young Harvard professor, whom I shall identify as Ernest, writes exultingly. “They outbalance the rest. You must understand that though we are not equal in kind of gifts, we are equal in value of gifts; and any apparent inequality is in degree of development.” Much that puzzles us about this world is explained when he adds: “Some don’t develop at all *chez vous*.”

Of Homer and Shakespeare, whom I had cited as instances of abounding greatness of gifts, he said: “They were flowers that were left on the earth to bloom so that you saw the blossom. When the flowers are cut, they blossom here. All have the same chance; but you mustn’t think that because you are not great *there*, it is your fault. Some of you are subject to circumstances which prevent development; and some of you are time-pieces. No—not *that* way,” he dashed in vigorously, when someone present laughed and spoke of a clock. “I don’t mean that

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you are foreordained to go off at seven! I mean that some gifts necessitate a longer training and thus cannot blossom early. That is a timepiece."

In other words, Homer and Shakespeare were not more splendidly endowed than their fellow men; they only came to quick fruition here where we actually saw their accomplishment. Others have to wait—some because this world retards them; some because their gifts are slow to mature, but no one's inheritance from God is less rich than that of his brother or less vital to the good of all. It is only a question of growth, of fulfillment. In that vast spiritual democracy—the only democracy that even as an ideal is complete—none is greater or less than another; each is the equal of all in his final potentialities.

"There is much work done here," writes Henry Talbot, in a passage already quoted, "but no labor."

"Do people on your plane," I asked him then, "grow weary and require to rest?"

"We do not grow weary, but we rest often. Sometimes we sleep, because it is so lovely, as we sometimes eat. You see, all

pleasure is *real*. The pleasure you derive from the body is real, living, and wholesome. The pleasure therefore remains, although the sources are changed and ennobled, thereby increasing the joy. . . . The body in its purity and health is real, in that it is formed of force and beauty. That part of it which you have injured decays, and, as I keep repeating the forms, may change. Life is the essential, whether incarnated or not. Do not neglect your body or despise it. Water it as a flower, but remember the flower and the fruit. The blossom begins to bud in your realm, blossoms out in this, but the fruit is of eternity.”

Beauty and joy seem, therefore, the natural accompaniment of both work and rest. A sweet lady, speaking of the animals, in whom I take a special interest, says, “Here they do not have to drag things.” The touch is eloquent. No living thing does anything against its own will. In the first place, the will is consulted; in the second, it responds.

For among the qualities most highly prized is individuality—the peculiar temperament which makes one human being different from every other human being, and on which, in

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this world, we put so low a price. Venturing one day to ask Henry Talbot after a connection of his, a boyhood friend of my own, I got the reply:

“He is here, and is still eccentric. People’s peculiarities remain when they are good. They give flavor. Individualism is accentuated rather than otherwise, because we develop in our fullness, and the diversity of gifts is marked.”

“Then you did not use the word ‘eccentric’ in a spirit of criticism?”

“No; otherwise.”

I said that the last time I had talked with this old friend, he seemed sad.

“He has filled up the cavities of his mind with joy.”

Having, on one occasion, asked Ernest if there were special intimacies and friendships on that plane, he answered:

“Oh, very decidedly! Individualism in all cases is emphasized.”

The worth of the human being simply as a human being of which, on this plane, we make so much in words and so little in fact, would seem there not merely to be recognized, but actually rejoiced in.

IV

We get the same effect, or glorious confusion of effect, when we are told what that sphere contains.

In the first place, impossible as it may seem to us, all life is there—all the life that ever was on this planet. Life, Henry Talbot affirms again and again, is indestructible. It is an overruling essential. That it should be incarnated, or disincarnated, or never incarnated is a mere detail. So long as it is life, it serves an eternal purpose and is destined to eternal progress. The life of a man is not more necessary to the reflection of the infinite Creator than is the life of the smallest insect. In that endless plan of endless self-expression, nothing is temporary, nothing is superfluous. All must needs be forever.

When Henry Talbot first expressed these ideas, I spoke of his plane as of necessity seeming to us overcrowded.

“You have no conception of the creation of the universe,” was his reply. “There is infinity to live in, and space has no limit, neither do any of us require it.”

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Comforting as I found—as many people find—the idea that the animals as well as men have immortality ahead of them, the thought of the noisome insects and the savage beasts could not but suggest itself.

“You have pushed them about with evil forces and displaced their energies,” he wrote. “Conform yourselves to harmony, and they will quickly find their rightful areas of action, and help rather than hinder you. When I say ‘evil forces,’ I mean you have used the ‘damming power’ of holding back good, and have thrown things out of kilter.* . . . You are afraid of the animals, and keep them by force of strength and thought from taking their appointed places in the world.”

Along what lines the animals develop has not been shown us, but the removal of one barrier between them and man is frequently referred to. They are taught to share in that “thought-exchange” which, in that sphere, takes the place of speech. Not that speech has become obsolete. It has only been superseded in the way of which the following

* The reference in the “damming power” is to a passage not quoted.

little passage with Ernest will be an illustration.

“That sure is so!” he had written in response to something we had asked him. As I was about to object that the form of speech had not been in vogue when he was with us some thirty years ago, he continued to write: “The slang comes to us here. Very good, too.”

“Do the soldier boys bring it over?” it occurred to me to ask.

“Yes; when they first come, they want to talk, and do not grasp at once our thought-exchange.”

“And you talk with them?”

“Yes; and the slang makes them feel at home.”

“Then notwithstanding your thought-exchange, you keep the power of language.”

“We have all your senses and ours, too. We do not often use yours. Why telegraph when you can telephone?”

In this power of immediate communication, the animals are trained to share, and no one who has lived with horses and dogs can doubt their capacity to do it. That we should

be ignorant as yet of the details of this work takes nothing away from the beauty of the conception.

And beauty of conception is itself eternal. "All good products of mind, human and divine," Henry Talbot informs us, in speaking of the wonders of his sphere, "can be both seen in your sense of sight and apprehended in our more powerful manner."

I asked about the countless number of books that came from the presses of the world, most of them to be soon forgotten.

"All the books are here, though there is no labor to reading."

"What about works of art?—for instance the lost works of art of the Greeks and other ancient nations?"

"They are all here. You see, those things are the expressions of God put through the prisms of your minds; and as expressions of God are *living words*. Works of art are the vision of the artist and come nearer to truth than any ordinary thing. It is because they are truer that you hold them exceptionally beautiful."

I asked if the books and pictures which we, the writers and painters, hope to make

so big and which prove so little were seen on that plane with heightened effect.

“Yes, very much heightened. We see the life behind them, which is the thought. Think of the word ‘inspiration’.”

“Does anyone with you possess anything in his private ownership?”

“The affectionate representation of inanimate objects remains, for the affection was a living thing. Take old furniture—trees, plus love and skill. Love is the only deed of possession. Whoever loves most owns generously.”

My next inquiry referred to the houses, rooms, furnishings, ornaments with which we are all familiar, that the owner or producer considers beautiful, and which to the educated eye are often pathetically ludicrous.

“The ugliness is replaced by love here. I mean, the place *was* truly beautiful always. It was merely the accident of substance that made it appear ugly to you—lack of development on the part of the architect or erector. There is great difference between the things made with love and unskilled fingers and the things made with clever hands devoid of love. Those are often intentionally ugly, or

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achieve false beauty. . . . that is a name for a quality unrecognized by you. There are very beautiful things here made by children on your plane. They used to be grotesque, but being the offerings and products of pure love the vision has put on immortality."

V

It is hardly surprising then to find the conditions of that sphere arranging themselves to suit the individual in a manner difficult to grasp. With us, it is assumed that the individual must arrange himself to suit the conditions of the sphere. We take it for granted that he comes into an iron-bound world to struggle with an iron-bound existence. Few are supposed to have the energy to free themselves or become captains of their fates, and they only to a limited degree. We are cramped and clamped within prisons of our own creating.

"You have thought yourselves into an atmosphere which you believe to exercise power," writes Henry Talbot. "It does not do so." Here he calls to witness the so-called miracles of our Lord as bearing out

his assertion that power is in the hands of man. "You have become the servants of your servants, the elements."

There, the elements are the servants of their masters, and, in a manner beyond our imagining, each calls up the world that his tastes demand.

"Anything that we desire can be at once created," he goes on to tell us, "for material substance is the agglomeration of force, which is one of our attributes. . . . Force is fluid, and can take any form deemed best."

"The state is fluid," says one of Margaret Cameron's correspondents; "the place is ephemeral."

I think it worth while to revert here to what Henry Talbot says about Raymond Lodge, in order to emphasize that which previously I only quoted.

"Reports vary, perhaps, in that our life being so much a state of mind, the point of view and the desires can greatly affect the facts themselves, altering events so as to coincide with wishes—within limitations."

That is to say, heaven is a state of development, and each man finds in it that which his degree of spiritual growth permits him

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to see. It is, above all, a condition in which the Sabbath is made for man, and not man for the Sabbath. I think I should be right in declaring that each one goes there as master of everything he has made himself fit to command. The greatest sinner, to use one of our familiar expressions, must enter there as one whose right is conceded. He is in his Father's house, where there are many mansions, and where the place has been prepared for him. Those who welcome—and many seem to be allotted to that task—receive him with a tenderness for which we have no terms; and yet, from what they tell us, he cannot be the recipient of celestial alms. He comes as the heir comes—the heir who has wandered into a far country and wasted his substance with riotous living—but is still the heir. The elements, the conditions, are to be his servants, not his masters, and he is to surround himself with what, in his state of growth, he most craves as helpful. “At first,” my friend tells me, “the newcomer rests for a period that varies according to his needs. He learns much during this time—as a baby does in its first years.” For the man who is unprepared there will be spiritual

anguish, of course; nevertheless, he goes on, "sinners and those of less sin get *at once* the sensation of being enfolded in perfect love. It is sometimes this feeling itself, however, that causes the intense remorse that cannot be helped, though we do our best to assuage the pain. It is the only kind of pain felt here." As indicated above, it is the inevitable pain of the prodigal son, when the ring and the robe have been put on him, and the Father is saying, "This thy brother was dead and is alive again and was lost and is found."

So in making and receiving such statements as come across to us, there must always be the understanding that no two are probably seeing the same thing—or that no two are seeing the same thing in precisely the same way. The brave lad who goes over from the trenches has a vision different from that of the scholar who has spent years in the contemplation of these subjects. That is natural; and the important thing to bear in mind is that only the natural happens there. To each comes what to him is the most satisfying thing in all creation. With that he is allowed to be satisfied till he asks for some-

thing more. He goes upward always—but at his own pace.

“Then in your sphere,” I said to Henry Talbot, “there is no such thing as discipline.”

“An army of free men,” was his reply. “An all-embracing guidance hedges us about, and yet there is eternal liberty. We cannot make mistakes, because the light is too strong to allow of anyone missing the way.”

To ourselves, a state of freedom is all but incomprehensible. We talk of free nations and free countries; but we really know nothing of the kind. We have some countries and nations freer than some others, but in all we are slaves to the conditions we elect to serve. The strongest and richest has no power to move otherwise than within strict limitations, while for those who are neither rich nor strong, there is no course but in subservience. No wonder, then, that a state in which the circumstances obey the man, and not the man the circumstances, is difficult to convey to us. We lack not merely the words in which it can be described, but the thought by which it can be conceived of. So much of our effort is spent in the attempt to get

a little of what we want that a life in which having all of it is but the starting-point of new stages of development, has aspects of joy so dazzling that we turn our eyes away from it as we do from too bright a sunlight. That there should be one world for Raymond Lodge, and another for Henry Talbot, and another for Ernest, the young Harvard professor, and another for each of the myriads of myriads who have preceded them since the beginning of time, and that no one's world should conflict with another's, that everyone's world, in fact, should be for everyone else to enjoy, presents such a vista of marvels beyond marvels that all efforts to make us see a picture of it must be inadequate, and sometimes must seem contradictory. It is a case in which many voices sing in harmony, though no two are sounding the same note. Looking at the notes alone, we may see nothing but discrepancy, while there may be nothing but beauty in listening to the hymn.

Thus, it would seem, all good and true and lovely things have their permanent abiding place. Nothing is wasted, nothing fails, nothing is ever in vain. Imperfection of outward form or lack of present success make no

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difference to ultimate beauty and appreciation. So much genuine effort seems futile; so much truly good work seems too fragile for man's use; so much is ignored, or crushed, or rejected, or forgotten; so much striving would seem to have no result but in the aching of hearts, that to be told there is a place in which all our poor yearnings are sanctified and treasured is a veritable gospel. To be able to say with Browning's Rabbi ben Ezra:

"All I could never be,
All men ignored in me,
This I was worth to God. . . ."

not merely as a concept put in practical results both reveals a New Heaven and suggests a New Earth.

Of the New Earth I shall speak later; but in closing this, I beg the reader to bear in mind that limitations of space restrict me to the merest glimpse of a subject of which no treatment would be sufficient. Without presuming to have anything to teach, I have still something to repeat from the source from which I have drawn so much, and shall have opportunities to take up some of the points which obviously

suggest themselves. Of these none is more insistent for the average mind than those that have to do with sex, family, and age.

Speaking of the sphere in which he finds himself Henry Talbot says:

“The sexes continue, sex being part of individuality. They grow nearer together in sympathy, but more diverse in gifts. They are two separate forces of God. They clash radiantly, producing energy and love. The contrasting and harmonizing elements are like flint and steel, and the flame of their spiritual contact is divine passion—the creative force from which not children are born, but power.”

Of the family he writes:

“It is continued, but enlarged. There is always a family tie, but it never conflicts with other ties, and groups are constantly interchanging according to the work or motive of the moment.”

On my asking if the family tie persisted throughout the many generations during which the history of a family goes on, he answered:

“Yes; that is what I mean by the family being enlarged. It includes all generations

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and ramifications, and thus merges into the universal family feeling for all mankind, as ripples spread in circles on the water, taking in more and more and more. Family life radiates here."

To my question as to whether or not the parents of a child who had passed on at what we call an early age would renew their relation with him, he wrote:

"They would be able to recognize and appreciate the child at once, but their work might be in different spheres. They would have no sense of lack of companionship."

Age on that plane is no longer apparently a matter of time.

"Age is a question of beauty rather than of development," Henry Talbot writes. "A person who comes to us after having reached maturity in your sphere assumes the aspect he bore at his most beautiful. Babies are babies still, and grow through spiritual development to maturity—a progressive maturity of beauty. Their beauty is never static, but changes constantly, deepening and enriching itself. This, however, is sensed by spirit, and not through the elementary vision which is yours."

Taking up his words, "the aspect he bore at his most beautiful," I asked whether this referred to physical or moral beauty.

"That which constitutes beauty is always the soul. All good people are beautiful, and if they do not appear so to you it is because of the faulty construction of the human eye. Not that the eye was made faulty; but you have limited its vision to the material, hence your powers of sight have become atrophied. . . . If your face seems ugly to your friends it is because they do not see that which perfects the false lines that reach their limited vision. When you see truly you will see truth or beauty in goodness, for they are all the same. Physical beauty with you is an accident, often marred by the unsympathetic or jarring character which shines through it, while in like manner ugly faces are often transfigured by the soul within. Here this transfiguration is general, the result being a perfect blend of the physical and moral expressions of loveliness. We are able to apprehend this fully, as our vision has become enlarged."

On my saying that he seemed to speak of

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the physical as if it survived the transition of death he wrote:

“All that is beautiful in the physical survives, not as material substance, but as abstract beauty individualized.”

Reverting to the question of age I asked if a man who had reached a high point of moral beauty at thirty, had deteriorated after that, and died in moral degradation at eighty would revert to what he had been at his best.

“His good points are all plus, and his evil minus. His aspect—if I may use the expression to denote that part of his personality which we apprehend most quickly—reverts to what it was at his highest degree of earthly beauty. His moral character, which imparts expression and individuality to his aspect, is the total of his good points after the evil has been subtracted, leaving the blanks to be filled up with good.”

In the New Heaven, therefore, the conception of age is exactly the opposite to what it is in the old earth. In no other respect does the rightness of God's will for man contrast more strikingly with the monstrosity of man's will for himself. Of all the in-

juries which man inflicts upon his children age is perhaps the most willful and wicked. Instead of measuring it by beauty he measures it by ugliness; instead of seeing it as progress in strength he foresees it as advance toward decrepitude from the day a child is born. Growth to man's vision is a brief and fluctuating development toward youth, after which the decline is swift and sure. As a reward for work and some degree of merit man can think of nothing better than wrinkles, weakness, and senility. The lad or the girl no sooner reaches the full flush of vigor than all eyes begin to watch for the first intimations of decay. By the time men and women have come to the magnificent maturity of fifty or sixty or seventy, when the knowledge of domination should be growing more and more exultant, the ghoulish mortal spirit is hard at work picking the flesh from the bones, the sight from the eyes, and getting ready to bury them. This is of a piece with all the other perverted and subverted methods by which man departs from God, and which the individual renders possible by an almost sinful acquiescence. With the spirit of a mouse men and women would have rebelled

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against this cruel condemnation long ago, recapturing at least some of the ageless, deathless possibilities that constitute their rightful inheritance.

It is true that within a generation the human point of view has shifted sufficiently for some such movement to be initiated. In the United States and throughout the British Empire especially the time-limit of age has been extended from that which most of us knew in our youth. Thirty years ago men and women of sixty were considered old; to-day they are allowed to be no older than the spirit within them dictates. That is an advance; but it is a more or less unconscious advance. Relatively few would admit that there is a God-founded principle behind it; and of those who would make the admission relatively few would consider themselves strong enough to make so much as the attempt to embody it. The immense majority would laugh it to scorn, preferring to sink into second childhood, turning the face to the wall to die.

But according to the standard of the New Heaven "age is a question of beauty," and beauty is a question of the points one has

to the good. Expressed very simply it might be like this.

Let us assume that 100 represents the perfection of the character which the human being can take with him to the next higher plane. John at the age (as we count) of seventy-five goes over with his good points reckoned as 40; James at the age of twenty-five goes over at the same instant, with his good points reckoned as 60. James is therefore 20 points ahead of John, and so becomes the more beautiful in essence and consequently the elder. John with so much to do to catch up is reckoned as the younger, on whom is to be lavished all the tenderness and training of which children are the objects. Some of this too will naturally be given to James, though he needs less in quantity, till both reach the beauty that is considered as maturity.

It is to be noted, however, that this is not a static but a progressive maturity. It is not a perfection of monotony; it is, as Henry Talbot says of the babies of this plane, brought to maturity on that, a constantly changing maturity, forever deepening, forever enriching itself, going on from perfect

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to more perfect, and from more perfect to more perfect still, with advances outside all our degrees of comparison.

That is age. It is age on that plane and ought to be age on this, since God cannot have two contrary wills as to the same thing. The God who had it in His power to give us youth and beauty, and yet snatched them away from us after a few years so fleeting that we scarcely realized that we ever possessed these gifts at all would be neither a just or loving God. That men have ascribed to Him so unworthy a caprice and yet have attempted to believe Him both loving and just is a proof of the degree to which they have misrepresented Him.

“But,” I have been asked, “if the evil in a man is not carried over to the next plane what becomes of it?”

Here we cannot do better than quote Browning's *Abt Vogler*.

“The evil is null, is nought, is silence defying sound;
What is good shall be good, with for evil so much
good more.”

The evil being null and nought drops into nullity and nothingness. It goes the way of

a dream when one wakes from it. When for evil so much good more has been substituted, and the blanks filled up, the character is completed with that completeness which can go on forever deepening and growing richer.

This is a system of age which we can accept as just. According to man's method youth which has done little to deserve it gets the reward; later life which has had all the labor receives chiefly the punishment. Man, by reasoning himself into it and willing it to be so, sends himself from bad to worse. God's will for our progress is from better to better still, with constant increase in energy, in achievement, in triumph over obstacles, till age is fully seen as the degree of beauty in which we come to resemble Him.

THE NEW EARTH

THE NEW EARTH

To sit down quietly in one's own house and talk into the Unseen used to be such an unusual experience that I should still hesitate to ask my readers to credit the possibility if something similar were not taking place all over the world. Up to the present time of stress, communication with those whom we rather cruelly call "the dead" has generally been associated with strange personalities and rites. There has been an element of mystery in it, and sometimes an atmosphere repellent to the sensitive. To converse with one whom we dearly love through a medium in contortions speaking with the voice, and sometimes in the language, of a wild Indian, is to some of us hardly preferable to not communicating at all. Intensely as we yearn to receive a sign, we shrink from the somewhat appalling paraphernalia of the intercourse.

In the case of Jennifer, through whom I receive my messages, the "loved and loving transmitter" as Henry Talbot calls her, there

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is nothing but sweetness, light, and simplicity. "He is fond of Jennifer," Ernest, the young Harvard professor, says of Henry Talbot, "and spends most of his time with her." Not all the time; for there are moments when she knows he is not there. They are only moments, however—ten minutes, fifteen perhaps—and then she will say, "He is here." It will doubtless be ascribed to sheer sentimentality on my part when I say that his coming brings us all a sense of happiness, and I am willing to accept the imputation. All I wish to say now is this—that Jennifer as a link between the two spheres is, to my mind, a quite natural one. Having known her all her life, I have always remarked of her that, without differing in any way from any normal child, she has had a matter-of-course capacity for living, to some extent, in the two worlds at once. In other words, what we see closed, she sees as partly open. She was only a little girl when I began using of her a quotation from one of Wordsworth's most beautiful sonnets, which still applies:

"Dear child, dear girl, that walkest with me here,
If thou appearst untouched by solemn thought,
Thy nature is not therefore less divine;

Thou liest in Abraham's bosom all the year,
And worship'st at the temple's inner shrine,
God being with thee when we know it not."

To those curious in literary reminiscence, it may be not without interest that it was in repeating these words of her, and to her, that I found the title to the book which proved my first real introduction to the American public. The novel was finished and was titleless. I had suggested a number to the publishers, none of which found favor. On a summer afternoon in 1908, Jennifer and I were scrambling along a woodland path in New Hampshire, when her childish talk in which, as I have said, the two worlds were open at once, called Wordsworth's sonnet, "It is a beauteous evening calm and free," to my lips. Reaching the words: "the temple's inner shrine," I had one of those bits of insight all writers know, exclaiming, "There is my title!"

The incident has no importance except as an instance of the long-standing of my knowledge that Jennifer had, by native instinct, some of that power to "see the universe as one" which Henry Talbot tells us we all possess if we could only be aware of

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it. That is really my point—that the gift is not exceptional. It may lie nearer the surface with one than with another, but it is at the command of all. We have many unused faculties, and this is an example. How each of us may begin, if he chooses, to acquire some control of it I hope, later, to tell as it has been told to me.

I

In speaking in "The New Heaven," I did not contend that such a conception of the next plane had never before been expressed. But to my knowledge, after many years of thought and study given to the subject, it has never before been expressed with such luminous clarity of beauty. Here I beg the reader to observe that this approbation is not intended for myself. In writing this I am little more than an amanuensis. Perhaps my office is rather that of the man who strings the pearls which someone else has given him. He is neither the owner nor the maker of the pearls.

I am at liberty to take a detached and appraising view of this presentation of a great topic for the sheer reason that the presenta-

tion is not mine. It comes to me as impersonally as the contents of the newspaper come to you in the morning. I have nothing to do but to receive. The slight amount of arranging of material which falls to my task hardly merits the name of collocation.

As a basis for the theme of this chapter, I beg, therefore, to point out certain advantages which this idea of the next plane has over those with which we are familiar.

First of all, it claims to be a view from within, whereas most of us were brought up on speculation from without. Even the Scriptures do not undertake to speak of the next plane in anything but glorious figures of speech. Our Lord refers to it seldom; St. Paul not much more frequently. The writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews looks forward to "a heavenly country," but he is no more explicit than any other of the sacred writers. The Revelation of St. John is rich in magnificent imagery; but it is obvious that this is not to be taken in the naïve literalness with which the well-meaning Anglo-Saxon reader, generally to his own dismay, has misconstrued it. Of this book, Henry Talbot writes that it is "the highest

development of individual spiritual writing. You have not grown to it yet." The crown and the harp and the golden city are all spiritually true; perhaps in some of the many spheres through which, we are told, we shall pass, they may be literally true; but it is still necessary to remind the Christian that they were never meant to be other than high symbolic interpretations of conditions beyond words. To the simple facts of experience as revealed by Henry Talbot, they bear somewhat the relation of a great allegorical painting by Watts or Burne-Jones or Puvis de Chavannes to the matter-of-fact portrait of a mother with her child.

As described from within, then, the first characteristics to which I would call the reader's attention is the supreme naturalness of the succeeding sphere. In normal conditions, the transition is easy. It may be compared to the first thrusting-aside of the soil as the shoot appears above ground. It is a spontaneous bursting toward spring, summer, and fruition. Any shock, according to Henry Talbot, comes from the excessive loveliness. Once only have I had a hint of sorrow on that threshold, and that will be

immediately understood. "Oh, poor Russia!" a great American statesman said, in speaking a few words through Jennifer. "*They come over wailing.*" The italics are mine; but that those lamentations are soon stilled in comfort we infer from all else that has been told us. In general, what I have stated seems to be true. Even those who go over by accident, violence, or some other man-created forestalling of the "appointed time," find everything done to soften abruptness in the arrival.

And next I would call attention to what I can only describe as the "divine economy" of that sphere. Everything that this sphere offers of good is credited. No single good act, thought, or intention of his is lost to the newcomer on that scene. "No evil endures," says Henry Talbot, "because it has not life." Whatever a man brings over with him *is good*. It may be very little; but from that little he is gradually built up. Naturally, the more of it he has, the speedier his growth; but any degree of good, though it may measure no more than a grain of mustard-seed, can be made a point of germination. Part of a man's immediate bliss, it

may be in the bitterest remorse, is the knowledge that he can and will work out to the fullness of his being in spite of all deterrents.

This, I venture to think, accords with our sense of justice more harmoniously than any other conception of the future ever placed before us. As to the traditional idea of the life to come, largely the imaginative work of pious nurses, our chief objection has been roused by its theory of judgment "in the lump." We were to be awarded to the right hand or the left, either according to a kind of rough average or through a scrupulous weighing of every grain of sand of conduct. If, the good outbalanced the evil, we were safe. If, on the other hand, the evil outbalanced the good it was the outer darkness and the gnashing of teeth. Here, again, spiritual figures were translated into terms of childish bugaboo. A large part of what we now call old-fashioned preaching was on the level of frightening a baby with a jumping-jack, with consequences which the organized Christian systems will not outlive for many a long year.

For human horse-sense has always rebelled against the methods of terrorism. While one

element in human opinion has looked upon fear as the shortest cut to triumph, another has stubbornly refused to be struck down by it. After ages of ages we are only now beginning to see that fear accomplishes nothing. Church and State have used it to the last extreme, only to discover a miraculous life in that which they had meant to crush, and to stay their hands sullenly. Experience, on the other hand, has shown that nothing resists forever the outpouring of pure love. In a prison I sometimes visit, more good has probably been effected by demolishing a stone wall that cut off the view of a river with mountains beyond, and substituting a high, open iron paling through which poor purblind men could catch a glimpse of God's world than was brought about in a century of stripes.

In a similar manner, Economy, Justice, and Love appeal to our common sense. The worst of us knows that there is something to be said on his behalf. Admitting the culpability of the race, the individual is guilty of only a part of it. Of the rest he is the victim. No one man alone has diverted the genus from its purpose to do right. Where

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the whole herd, like the Scriptural swine, runs violently down a steep place to be choked in the Sea of Perversion, the right-minded are swept along with the more willful. For the individual it becomes harder and harder to resist what has grown to be almost a race-instinct toward evil; and of that he is aware. To be condemned with a world into which he never asked to come naturally strikes him as unfair. The one crime against them which children never pardon is unfairness, and the same may be declared of men. Here, then, is a system that takes every man at his best, however much or however little that best may include, making his own achievement the measure of his reward. It is not too much to say that this vision of a New Heaven almost necessitates that of a New Earth.

II

I must say here that this chapter will differ from those that have preceded it, in that it will give chiefly my own inferences from what we have been told. The old method of deduction reasoned to a certain kind of heaven because there was a certain kind of

earth; I beg, on the contrary, to plead for the existence of a certain kind of earth because there is a certain kind of heaven.

That this has to be done mainly by deduction is due somewhat to the fact that our conditions are seen by those on the next plane less clearly than they see their own. Moreover, we know about our own, while theirs have to be revealed to us. Of their conditions, as far as my slight experience goes, there are always spiritual guides to instruct us. For countless generations, apparently, they have been making the attempt, and we have refused to listen. "My special mission is to regenerate the world" (that is, to take part in the work for the regeneration of the world), writes Henry Talbot, "and it hurts me when I try in vain, and all turn from me." But the regeneration of this world is, from what I gather, directly helped by a reasonable knowledge of that one.

That knowledge, I repeat, they are eager to give us, while speaking with hesitation and sometimes with reluctance of the circumstances closest to ourselves.

"Suggest, enlighten, encourage," says one

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of Margaret Cameron's correspondents in "The Seven Purposes," "but don't try to carry the burden of another's life."

"We are perfectly definite and explicit about questions of eternal purpose," Frederick Gaylord, in the same book, says in his genial young man's way. "The difficulty with most people is that they want to know how much U. S. Steel will go up next Tuesday, or whether to give the baby soothing sirup."

This is the difficulty all of them find in dealing with the details of a life they have passed beyond. Its high and beautiful lights they see and recognize; the needs of loved ones they can judge and try to help; our commonplace details they reach with considerable effort, and of evil they are not only unwilling to speak but to think. The whole concept has become alien to them, and repugnant.

Of this last, an incident not unamusing will serve as an illustration. I had asked, through Jennifer, Henry Talbot's opinion of a certain line of rulers, not as a matter of curiosity but as bearing on a larger theme. The answer was written:

“Some of the —— were mediocre, some good, and some evil. They do not differ from other men and are treated accordingly. Yet the measure of a man’s opportunity is the measure of his guilt.”

We had begun to discuss this answer among ourselves when the pencil wrote:

“I did not say that about the —— being mediocre, good, and evil, because we never express ourselves on what you call faults. We do not know them. You”—this to Jennifer—“wrote that in, and you must take it out.”

Notwithstanding Jennifer’s laughing explanation that, at the minute of writing, she thought she was expressing her own opinion, and not his, I asked if it were possible that, consciously or unconsciously, she had been writing in other things.

“That is the only thing that does not express *me*. There are slight imperfections of haste.”

Speaking of our remorse for lack of love or kindness to those who have gone on, and of our desire to atone to them, if that should ever be possible, for coldness or neglect, he says:

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“ Good thoughts are living and enduring. They come to us always, forever, and reach the individual with a promptness that is instantaneous. . . . All these impulses are seen by us. We look upon you and see *all* the good—never any evil—but we see the blanks, and we see the conditions brought about by them.”

There are blanks, therefore, in their view of us, with a corresponding lack of clearness in dealing with many of our problems. It is not that they lack the will; it is rather that, having passed to different modes of life, thought, and communication, they cannot always pierce the atmosphere by which we surround ourselves or express their ideas as to our conditions.

In this connection, Henry Talbot says:

“ We can always reach you if you need us and are willing to listen. Often we do reach you and are able to deliver messages, though you yourselves fail to recognize the voice as being a force outside yourselves. Some of us can penetrate your problems more easily than can others; but *there is always someone here to help you in your troubles* whether or not you ask for counsel

or are aware of it after it has been given. Many of us can comprehend even the smallest details of your lives, as with our ease of mental action details present no complexity. We cannot, however, perceive evil, and are conscious only of blanks when it is present. We see its consequences, and are able also to send warnings of its approach, helpful warnings to those who are attentive. We do this, *not because we feel the evil on the way, but because we see so clearly the road of safety and wisdom on which no evil can be met with.* We can sometimes see you turning aside from this road, and, if you are sensitive to our message, can give you warning. Cultivation, therefore, of the spiritual ear is of utmost importance, for through this organ you can apprehend the words of life."

On my inquiring as to the directness with which they can aid in our affairs, the reply came:

"It is exactly as with your friends and relatives on earth. Between some of us and some of you there is a bond of sympathy so strong that we can enter into the details of your life. This can only be in cases of remarkably developed nearness; I mean in

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cases where the affection is so great and the communion so constant that we are literally 'taken into' the family life. In cases such as these, messages might be exchanged regarding mundane matters *which possess an undercurrent of spirituality*. We cannot answer purely worldly questions. These cases of intimate communion are, however, comparatively rare—rarer than they should be."

When I questioned as to whether or not what we call the voice of conscience might not be the speech of those on the other plane as they try to approach us, he wrote:

"Conscience is that portion of yourselves which is here—your periscope which pierces the barrier and reflects to you the heavenly point of view. . . . There is something I want said, and it is this: The possibility of communication with us, and your interest in us, individually and collectively, must never be allowed to stand between you and your consciousness of God. Remember it is He who is All in All, and who holds you closer than any other possible entity enfolded in His everlasting arms. We are expressions of Him; but do not forget that it

is He who speaks through us, and that we are the reflections of His glory.”

Perhaps that best expresses the kind of touch they are able to maintain with us, though those whose work, like that of Henry Talbot, lies near to us are able to come closest. Even he, however, finds it difficult, now and then, to get the necessary contact.

“I like to help in everything I can; but sometimes it is harder than others. Do not seek to work blindly, but ask, and I will tell you all I can. . . . We are all able to know all your thoughts but some of us have work here which takes us away, except in answer to a special call. . . . You use your mind too actively in your efforts to hear, and I cannot overcome your thoughts at times. Relax, and lay your head on my shoulder. . . . Give me your hands, and I will lead you on.”

In such words as these the yearning is quite evident, but it is like the yearning of a mother in one continent over a son in another. Something is worked by it; and yet there are distances between.

The extent to which they can aid us by supplying principles is perhaps illustrated

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by the following from Henry Talbot to a young business man interested in the subject mentioned below.

“Tell R. that the advertising will be all right, and that he is to devote himself always to *what a thing stands for*. Then the details will come. Advertising stands for service and good-will, never for deception. Let him put his mind on that, and express in all things love, service, and the desire to promote friendship in all lands. That is true commerce.”

With this whole aspect of the theme I deal more fully in “The New Tongue.” I bring it forward now in order to explain why, from the sources at my command, I cannot quote the same authoritative voices with regard to this plane as I have been privileged to do of the next one. As far as I can see, the object of this form of communication is not to relieve us of a single responsibility, and still less is it to put it on the level, to which the thoughtless would bring it down, of fortune-telling and reading palms. Its purpose is to suggest, enlighten, encourage. Henry Talbot refers to his special work as that of “holding

the lamps." But he, and they who work with him, hold them in such a manner that, while they illumine the way ahead, they throw many a rich reflection back upon our immediate darkness. It is by reflection that we catch the beams, by inference, by deduction; and therefore I ask permission to sketch our life on earth as seen in rays streaming right out of heaven.

III

The first impression it makes on me is that of a life which develops with a continuity I, personally, never dreamed of. I dreamed of a continuity, but of some such continuity as Raleigh's Red Indians knew when they were carried over the sea into the court of Queen Elizabeth. To me, there was a gulf to cross, and a life so glorious to enter into that, before the idea of it, do what one would, one's spirit quailed. Its splendors might easily defy all terms of my imagination; and yet it would not be *my* life. My life would be over. My duty would be to conform myself to another life—a life for which I had no longing, and as far as I knew myself, no tastes. The

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small, stupid interests so dear to me, so inexpressibly dear to me, would be snatched away as insufficient and unworthy, somewhat as a little boy's toy is taken from him in order that he may improve his mind with a book.

But here a heaven was shown me into which I carried all that was really living on my earth; here an earth was depicted which was, in reality, the beginning of my heaven. My earth and my heaven belonged together. The one sprang as simply from the other as daylight from the dawn. The fullness of noontide would be no more than an enhancement of this first pearl shimmer in the east. The first pearl shimmer in the east, cold, pale, cheerless, it might easily seem to me, must become at last the fullness of the noontide.

I speak for myself alone when I lay stress on the joy I find in the thought of everlastingly possessing the small things I have cared about. After all, it is the small things that make *me*. By them, I mean my work, my affections, my friendships, my tastes, my habits, my surroundings, my pastimes, my books. These, I understand, are permanent

acquisitions, expressive of my individuality, which, in its turn, is expressive of my type of gifts. Through them, it appears, I re-express the Father who expresses Himself in me. These things get their value not because they are mine alone but because they are both mine and His. His is the first creative force, and mine the secondary; and as He rejoices in His so He allows me to rejoice in mine. "We are the prismatic colors of His glory," Henry Talbot has written; and each prismatic color gives back the rays of light with its special refraction. "Beauty is infinite, or it would not be beauty." "Beauty can never be exhausted." These are among our teacher's favorite thoughts. There is a beauty of the pale-gray dawn as there is a beauty of the midday, and each is indispensable.

IV

So that, in the next place, I get a sense of the value of the life I am now leading. All its achievements that cannot be classed as evil, and fortunately they are many, go into the building of what the Epistle to the Hebrews calls my house "not made with

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hands, eternal in the heavens." That is to say, they are worth while.

For a great deal of the time, one is tempted to think one's doings—I speak only of the harmless ones—not worth while. Looking outside of oneself, one sees hundreds of lives so humdrum, so plodding, so *dead* to our eyes, that one wonders how anyone can be content to mark such a treadmill round. One sees lives of drudgery, lives of failure, lives of that near-success more poignant to the truly ambitious than the tragedy of rejection. The surface of the earth is strewn thick with what we are tempted to consider mere dead wood; and yet for all of it there is use, growth, beauty, equal to that of the oak tree or the palm. Where we see waste there is only an infinite economy. The poor soul selling shoe-laces in the street is no less than a retarded radiance. Not that that should make us tolerant of the conditions that keep him back—of course not; but for him, at the very worst, it is only a postponing of the happiness of counting with the best. Lazarus may have to lie for a time at the rich man's gate, but he will get his opportunity. It is equally a comfort to know that the rich man

will get his opportunity, too, when he has grown to it. After all, Abraham called him "*Son.*"

But I come back to the personal life—to yours and mine. They have their high lights, their deep shadows, and long stretches of sheer monotony in which progress seems frozen in routine. The vast majority of us come to years of life in which we seem to do nothing but mark time, and to mark it very laboriously. Men in shops, factories, and offices, men doing physical hard work, mothers of families, women doing housework, stenographers, teachers, writers or artists who are only partially successful, if that—the time would fail me to count the classes and categories for whom the first spurt onward ends in what seems like a long standstill. And yet, in the light of the New Heaven, we see these epochs, often the greater part of the life of this phase, as periods of immense activity.

When perhaps we strike both others and ourselves as more or less sterile, we are really busy producers. Not one hour's work will be lost. Of the days which seem to follow each other appallingly into oblivion, the out-

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put is being permanently stored away. To us the results seem gone—but so do his pennies to a child when he is persuaded to put them into the savings-bank. He can hardly believe that he will receive them again with interest; and yet we elders know that he will. In the same way we can know the same things of our life-economies laid up in this New Heaven. What has seemed to us evanescent is in reality enduring. All the tasks of duty, of patience, kindness, perseverance, to say nothing of the offerings of love, have undying value. They have, perhaps, the greater value from the fact that to perform them we willingly school our steps to the hard path of self-repression and self-sacrifice.

To change the figure, when we see a fine building, we think little of the piers and foundations on which its beauty rests; but we know that architects and masons have toiled for months to add block to block or brick to brick in order that the superstructure shall be strong. That is the work we are seemingly doing in the years that sometimes appear profitless. Like the men in the plain of Shinar, we are building a tower whose top

shall reach unto heaven—only that we are doing it on a different principle. Babel is a symbol for confusion. The tower which each of us is raising for himself stands for a great unity. Every right effort goes into it, and every effort has its place. It is on the value of the single effort that our thoughts should concentrate as much as on the value of the whole. One brick in a wall may not seem much till we think of what the wall would be without it. So with our separate duties and actions throughout a given day. Nothing there is ephemeral, or merely for that day. Just as the brick or the block once laid is a lasting contribution, so the meal cooked or the letter copied or the ditch digged, or any other act of what seems like passing drudgery, becomes, very distinctly, part of the permanent foundation on which our everlasting lives are being raised.

v

From this we induce the true nature of a feature in life we have talked much about of late, and that is Service. It is not too much to say that, for most of us, "Service" is a voluntary contribution—like singing to

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an after-dinner company—which we have the right to withhold. To the ordinary round of duty it is an added touch—and often a superfluous touch, like painting the lily.

Otherwise, we think of ourselves as mostly playing a lone hand. “Do the best you can for yourself,” is a homely counsel most of us have heard, “for no one else is going to do it for you.” It is more or less the accepted standard. To help to do the best for someone else is a task we generally put off on clergymen, whom we pay to relieve us of our altruism, and single women of leisure and means who have nothing better to do. For ourselves, we either shelve it or we take it in spurts at times of high pressure, like those of making drives for the Red Cross Fund or raising Victory Loans.

But the design of the New Heaven suggests a similar possibility for the New Earth. There, all life is an organized system of interservice from which no one is left out in either duty or benefit. We saw in the last chapter that as soon as a man had oriented himself to the conditions of that plane his work was before him. Much work, but no labor, is the way in which Henry Talbot puts

it. The distinction is important, and lies in more than the easing of the task. If anything was conceivable as labor it would be turned to work by the very joy of doing it; and the joy of doing it would spring from the evidence of its usefulness.

“Usefulness” is a word for which, I venture to think, we have not got the proper value. For the most part, we confine its application to ourselves and our families. Among the vast armies of paid workers, only one here and there extends it to the man who pays him. When it comes to our personal usefulness to the race at large, few of us have the minds to conceive of it or the hearts to care anything about it. But it seems that, by working too exclusively for ourselves, we overshoot the mark and lose the very thing we are striving for.

When I asked Ernest, the young Harvard professor, if there were special intimacies and friendships on that plane, he answered, in words I have already given:

“Oh, very decidedly.” He went on, however, to add, as I have not hitherto said, “But we think a great deal more of the public than you do.”

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Unaccustomed as he now is to using our language—he has told us that—it is nevertheless easy to see what he means. Here our hearts go out only to those nearest us; there, their hearts go out to all. He hints that though special friendships exist, the love of all men makes friendship less essential than it is to us. To us, some men mean so much partly because all men mean so little. So the joy possible in working for people we never see, whose names we never heard, a joy that turns labor into work, is practically non-existent. We make our work heavier by the repression we put on our good will.

That a man who is helping to build a motor-car should get satisfaction in the pleasure of the man who is going to ride in it is a sort of incident that may occur in life, but, without being a pessimist, one is free to believe it rare. But it is the secret of service; it is the secret of one's personal joy in doing things. On a plane where everyone worked whole-heartedly for everyone else's good, there would naturally be an immense lightening of the all-round burden. A distinguished Canadian public man has recently said that the deadlock between capital

and labor would never give way till both labor and capital looked upon itself as only a medium of service. This is quite true. Until that is accomplished any compromise between them will never, from the very nature of things, be more than a truce.

A life of interrelated loving service is, then, that which the New Heaven shows as an ideal for the New Earth. Money would be less important then, because each would give all he had to all. Want, poverty could not occur because love would be the provider. "Love is the only deed of possession," I quoted from Henry Talbot, "and he who loves most owns generously." "Poverty, like disease," he says elsewhere, "is the invention of man. Any man who trusts in God and endeavors shall lack nothing." Of families seemingly left destitute by the loss of husbands and fathers, he says: "God can provide for them as well through others as through their relatives. They are no less protected. . . . God will *always* care for the helpless left behind, unless again the free will for evil of men interferes with God's way. This interference he always suffers, since free will is man's prerogative."

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It is obvious, then, that, as God expresses Himself in service to us, and we re-express Him in service to others, and others re-express that re-expression in service both to Him and ourselves, we form the circle of perfect unity.

VI

On the subject of religion, as might be expected, those on the other plane utter their thoughts more willingly than on some other topics connected with ourselves; yet even here there is reluctance. The field of religion has so notoriously been the battleground of human passions that one detects easily enough a caution on the part of those who speak as to entering upon it.

“Around some of the statements Jesus made to the people of His time,” writes one who has spoken to me, “have grown, in the intervening centuries, beliefs He never intended; and to use His name, or quote His teaching, or invoke His influence, immediately involves the disagreements and misinterpretations arising in all these centuries.

“Therefore, we who are speaking to you

now, while we are trying to express in modern terms and to meet in modern conditions the same fundamental truths Jesus taught, also generally avoid direct reference to Christian teaching and influence, because we wish to avoid, if possible, renewing the old schisms, and to draw men together with the truth Jesus taught rather than to separate them farther by even indirect allusions to the things some of them believe He taught."

I have found this hesitation verified in all my attempts to get an expression of opinion either endorsing or disapproving of our religious schools of thought. In a sphere where God, Love, and Service fill the soul, there seems to be a natural shrinking from the sectarian. As practically all our religious thinking is done in sectarian terms, those on the other side lack the language in which they can talk to us. Henry Talbot is as spontaneous as anyone, but even he, with all his desire to help, has answered some of my questions with what has been evident reserve.

"How far," I asked him, "do religions and philosophies help us in preparation for your plane?"

"Anything that gives us the right rules

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of conduct and the reasons for their being right is of great assistance.”

“Can you say anything of the relative value of creeds?”

“The highest creed your sphere has possessed is that of the Christian faith before men distorted it.”

“Will you give me a definition of faith?”

“Faith is the trusting search for and final obtaining of knowledge.”

This will give an idea of the lines along which they are willing to deal with topics associated in our minds with discord and division. Of God, Love, and Service they will tell us anything they can put into our speech; but they will not, for instance, go into distinctions between Protestants and Catholics.

As to Protestants and Catholics, he writes:

“There is a slight difference in the angle of their approach to truth when they first come over, but it quickly vanishes. Sects are like the barbed-wire fences, hedges, stone walls, which you build to mark the divisions between fields belonging to different owners. The earth is a unit, just as faith is a unit, and these superficial distinctions quickly dis-

appear" (that is on the next plane) "because of their uselessness."

Of the sects, he writes further: "Men are not able to take in more than a little of truth at one time. Different men get different aspects of the same fact, and those perceiving the same aspect form one sect. Only development of spiritual comprehension can bring about the union of the fragments into one mosaic."

I asked if the reunion of Christendom was a possibility.

"Yes; but you must drop the sense of rivalry, since all are contributors to the faith. No hatred or prejudice can endure."

Asking if that reunion would ever come about as a fact, I got the answer:

"I do not know; but I think it possible. Such communications as these broaden the spiritual horizon, and you may gradually be led to see things as we do—as unfenced units."

As I began to speak of the unfenced unit of Christendom, he wrote rapidly:

"You cannot even say the unfenced unit of Christendom, for the other religions are also expressions of God. Though Christianity be the highest, they have their part—

and a great part. Even the most primitive of faiths is faith."

I asked if all the multitudes of Christians, Jews, Mohammedans, Buddhists, and less developed religionists came finally to the same understanding of God.

"Yes; they come to the same perception in eternity; and very early reach a harmonious interunderstanding; but they approach from different angles."

Asking for a definition of worship, I got the laconic reply:

"Conscious harmony."

In reply to a question as to the value of our church services viewed as worship, he wrote:

"Your church services are often consciousness—spiritual self-consciousness. Harmony may or may not be in them. It is this introduction of harmony which must regenerate the Church. . . . When you sincerely offer to God of the best, when you sing Him hymns of sincerity, they are appreciated, not because they are music but because it is an honest outpouring of the heart, and the vehicle happens to be a hymn or a prayer. It is always the thought, never the vehicle, that

matters. Co-operation has its value in worship, if you will not exclude the spontaneous."

Thus, in the New Earth there will be no place for sects in the sense of centers of discord, perpetuating rivalry and enmity in the name of God and Love. All churches will be dedicated to harmony and mutual help. Perhaps there will be none. "I saw a New Heaven and a New Earth," we find written in that book which Henry Talbot characterizes as that highest point of individual spiritual writing to which as yet we have not grown; "for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away. . . . And I saw no temple therein; for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it."

VII

On the kindred subject of nationality those who have preceded us to the other plane express themselves more freely, for the reason, doubtless, that national divisions are less deadly than those that spring from religion. "Evil thoughts are displacements of God's beautiful thoughts," Henry Talbot says; and it would seem that the most unsettling of such displacements occur when God Himself be-

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comes, so to speak, the object over which men learn to hate.

That nationality may one day melt into brotherhood it is permissible to hope. In the meantime, it can be made the exposition of man's vast diversity of gifts. "The purpose of nationality," writes Henry Talbot, "is the same as that of individuals. There is fundamentally no more reason for wars between different nations than there is for combats between men of one gift and men of another. It is as ludicrous an exhibition of co-ordinate egotism for race to fight with race as for all musicians to join in a war against all painters."

Nationality forming so large a part of the interest of this phase of life, I ventured to ask my chief correspondent for a word as to the peoples with which my readers have probably most to do. With regard to the American people, he said he would rather ask the statesman whom I have quoted on the subject of Russia earlier in this paper.

"Torch-flashing is the mission of the American people," this statesman wrote when he came. "We have climbed higher on the mountain of civilization than have other peo-

ples, and must plant our banner and flash our torch from each peak as we ascend. The foreign element in the nation is a golden thread in the woof of our weaving. We must live up to the standard of the past and outdistance its merit by our progress toward the standard of the future. We are the leaders of clear-sighted virtue."

As to these claims to civilization and virtue, Henry Talbot explains that they are not assertions of attainment but only of a comprehension of principles that will lead to this attainment—"the truest grasp of God's idea, and the clearest sense of harmony." The words imply, therefore, no national boast, but only a recognition of that quickness to perceive the light and run up to a pinnacle and flash it, which, I think, anyone would concede as part of the national American equipment.

Of the British, Henry Talbot says:

"The British are the procurers of civilization. They are the pioneers who bring enlightenment to dark places. They develop the backward, while we develop the advanced. They are the nurse, and we are the governess of mankind. We are all one people

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even in your sphere, and as such must cooperate lovingly."

The following is what he says of Canada:

"The Canadians have a mission for which they have been specially selected. They are to represent the Anglo-Saxon God-Idea.* Their task will be one of production. It is not yet clear to me just how, but they will represent God. They understand the mission of sex better than any people, and this will be the kernel of their greatness. They are greatly honored here, and much loved."

Asking what he meant by the understanding of the mission of sex better than any people, I get the following:

"The men are more intelligent towards the women, and have more intuitive tenderness. The women are more manly at heart. They clash more radiantly than other nations, and produce a harder and clearer-visioned race. They are un-trammeled."

Of Mexico he gives me this:

"Mexico is of the second generation of nations. Her fecundity accumulates, but her

* God's idea as worked out by the Anglo-Saxon race; not the Anglo-Saxon race-idea of God.

riches are still stored away. When man can show his worthiness to use the heritage of God, then Mexico will be ready to offer her service and receive her reward. Mexico and Russia are blind children wailing in the streets—rich children, but blind. If your pity be not moved by their plight, you cannot profit by the wealth they own.”

On my requesting a word that would serve as a guide to my own mental stand toward the Germans, he wrote:

“You cannot do better than to emulate the attitude which we take here—one of loving sympathy for their deformity of soul. If you could understand the tragedy of their condition you could not harbor hatred. When they are blatant with brutality, treat them like patients suffering from delirium who must subject themselves to discipline. No one in your sphere has any conception of the nature of punishment.”

The object of making these quotations is merely to show purpose. With the conception of a New Earth goes a truer vision than we have ever had before of the mission of men, religions, nations. Each has an end to serve. It is true of every race, religion,

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and individual that, in the eternal scheme, there is a place into which that one alone can fit. In a royal diadem every gem, emerald, sapphire, ruby, pearl, brings out something of the beauty of every other gem. "I have the more to give him," one friend says of another in a novel of George Eliot's, "since his treasure is different from mine. That is the blessedness of friendship." It is the blessedness of the universal plan. The power of mutually blessing each other, and therefore of perpetually re-expressing God, would seem to be the secret of national, religious, and individual differentiation.

THE NEW TONGUE

THE NEW TONGUE

It is no more than a truism to assert that intercourse between this plane and the one next above us has never occupied the public mind to the extent that it does to-day. There have been other periods of public interest, but not on the scale of this one. For the very reason that it has come slowly, it has come with accumulated force.

That force is perhaps the greater owing to the fact that its impulse is due not to ardent religious idealism but to cold scientific investigation. From the whole movement, religions have held aloof. Individuals connected with churches have here and there associated themselves with it; but religious minds have generally been indifferent to the undertaking. Scientists, chemists, philosophers, psychologists have mainly lent their aid, though with much opposition and some scorn from their more conservative colleagues. Other circumstances, such as our present terrifying world-distress, contributing, the

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whole subject has come to the forefront of men's minds as one demanding serious consideration.

I shall, however, have failed in my intention if I seem to put myself forward as the advocate of a theory. My only object is to lay before my readers some broken examples of things said to me of late in a quite extraordinary way. By that I do not mean that similar things are not being said to others—they are, all over the world—but the methods of saying them are outside all hitherto recognized systems for the give and take of ideas. I do not pretend that in these fragmentary quotations there is anything novel or startling; but they do seem to me to have a freshness of point of view. Furthermore, they seem to me to have a point of view—or, at the least, to suggest one—not precisely of this planet. That I find not in any particular statement but in the spirit of all the statements. It is an aroma rather than an element.

I know that I write as if I had evolved something akin to a philosophy out of these so-called conversations; but this I do for the sake of ease in presenting the case. Were

I to make everything conditional which I know to be conditional, it would become too wearisome to the reader. As a matter of fact, the writings which are poured out in an abundance of which I can give little idea are too new to me to allow as yet of much co-ordination or sifting. They come through the young girl I have called Jennifer, who writes them down with a fluency and speed in which there is far less hesitation than in ordinary speech. There is, in fact, no hesitation whatever, the most difficult questions getting the same promptness of reply as the simple ones.

As for proof of the presumed speaker's identity, or that there is a speaker outside Jennifer or myself, I have sought for none. The internal evidence of high and beautiful thought has been enough for such purposes as I have in mind. That it may not be enough for the reader goes without saying; but it is part of my object to get him to supply it for both himself and me.

I have not been, however, so much at ease in my mind on this point as not to bring it up with Henry Talbot, my chief correspondent. On one occasion, he replied,

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“If good fruit is not the evidence of a good tree, nothing can be.”

At another time, when I had pleaded that where wiser and greater men sought for proof I should reasonably do the same, he answered, in the words of Joan of Arc at her trial:

“I know neither A nor B, but I come as one sent from God”—“*Je ne sais ni A ni B, mais je viens de la part de Dieu.*”

I

If intercourse is possible between the so-called living and the so-called dead, it becomes one of the most pressing of our concerns to discover the laws of that communication, and to put them into operation. This, we are assured by some of those who have preceded us to the other plane, all can do. It is a perfectly natural form of speech. The important question is to learn it.

In the very nature of the case, this cannot be easy. Where through eons of ages a door has been kept shut, it will be rusty on its hinges. The human race having willed to believe that that which it named “death” cut it off definitely from those whom it named “dead,” not only closed the door but allowed

masses of vegetation to grow up against it. The result is that sense of ghostliness we find in all deserted habitations.

It is also characteristic of the human race to try the most difficult means first. Its distrust of the simple and natural is fundamental. Given the choice of two methods, one straightforward and one artificial, it will take the artificial. All teachers of the arts—painting, singing, speaking, writing, what you will—know how great must be the effort to secure simple, natural production. The simple, natural way of doing anything, from sailing a ship to boiling an egg, has been so obscured by man's perversity of mind that we can only attain to it through practice and experience.

It is not surprising, then, that in the discovery of this new intercourse—the finding of what should never have been lost—man's first attempts were in the direction of the awesome, and not infrequently the grewsome. Going straight and serenely to the point would never have appealed to the average seeker after truth. "Except ye see signs and wonders," says the Nazarene Master, "ye will not believe." Unless there had been

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weird rappings, levitations of heavy objects, and mediums writhing on floors, the dense human mind might never have received a sufficient shock. The darkened room, the curtained cabinet, and the spirit of some outlandish chief gibbering in Choctaw before he can get his ideas into broken English, all belong to the puerile world in which, from one point of view or another, the majority of men and women prefer to dwell. It has to be remembered in dealing with this or any other subject that we belong to an undeveloped race. Our greatest men—our statesmen, generals, scientists, writers—rise but little above the infantile. A conference representing the mightiest forces on earth meets to fulfill one of the most momentous of all missions; and they reach the intellectual level of children squabbling over toys and breaking them. It is the best we can do.

So in the laudable attempt to establish communication with another plane, it is natural for us to begin in the wrong way.

“Spiritualism,” says Henry Talbot, “is a sincere search for truth, but directed into the wrong channels. . . . Appearances and voices make use of the coarser senses, while

this method"—that of writing—"appeals to that which is most divine in man, intelligence, and the divine passion of aspiration."

"What," I asked, "from the point of view of your plane, are mediums?"

"They are passive instruments in our hands, and can be possessed by different people; but we are not accustomed to that way of communicating and do not like it. It is often misleading for we have not learned the laws."

On my asking if it would be of any help to me personally to consult a medium, the reply was vigorously written and underscored:

"No; don't go."

"Is spiritualism better than having no intercourse with your plane?"

"Very much better. It is a feeling after God. It is good to desire the communication, to believe it possible, and to make efforts to establish it; but do not go to mediums."

I made some reference to the distinguished men, such as Sir Oliver Lodge, Sir Conan Doyle, and other scientific and intellectual celebrities who frequent them.

"They must be persuaded to use other

channels as soon as possible. They get satisfaction; but it is not in the best way. It is better than no way; but it is like a long-distance connection compared with a quiet talk."

I asked if there were not people in the world who could only be astonished into credence.

"They are the shallow ones, who are impressed with signs and *evidence*. Evidence for the purpose of convincing a vacillating mind we will not give. Only after you have made the honest effort to believe with the whole heart can true, unerring evidence be accepted. We play no tricks."

"Is any effort being made on your plane to counteract what we call spiritualism on this?"

"Not so much to counteract as to assist and demonstrate, and to lead to the true way. I oppose the *séance*, but I do not oppose the desire to communicate. I want to explain to those who seek communication that they must use channels like this, or try to talk directly. Mediums should be discouraged from using their gifts in their usual way, and should try to write. That would do away

with the accompanying physical effect of their trances, and with the mystery and awesomeness which surround their interviews. To that we are opposed, as all communication should be simple, natural, and in the light."

On my asking whether or not he was aware of the wave of spiritualism said to be sweeping England, he replied,

"It is the natural development upward coming in its natural course."

"Then you do consider it development upward?"

"I speak of spirituality which sometimes takes the form of spiritualism. Spirituality is the aspiration of the soul as expressed by the intellect. Spiritualism is a compound of aspiration and curiosity, sometimes more strongly the one than the other, but always of dual composition. Spiritualism has not a sufficiently definite aim to meet with a satisfactory and definite response from our side; but spirituality cannot fail to establish contact with us here, as it is rhythmical. That is, spiritual thoughts being in harmony with God's creation are transmitted quickly by the waves of rhythm, and reach us here. The spiritually minded are also prepared to re-

ceive in like manner the response from us, which is always given but not always recognized."

To Henry Talbot there is but one true and legitimate form of intercommunion. Direction of the pencil at its best is but second best. The natural language of the universe is thought-exchange. This all can acquire; and to it there is no barrier in any sphere.

"Your thought-life," he says, "is the engine in the motor—that which causes your external life to *be*—the vital dynamic force."

Thought and force, as he uses the words, are almost synonymous terms, and rhythm is the means by which they operate. Rhythm is the rhythmic motion with which the universe is alive. I may not be wrong in calling it "the first expression of Creative Mind." To it, everything that is must be related. As I understand it, it is God's basic harmonious principle, and it is in proportion to our comprehension of it that we are either strong or weak, successful or unsuccessful, right or wrong.

What is more directly to our present point is that it is the great medium of intercommunication. Whether we know it or not—

and in the incalculable majority of cases we do not know it—our thoughts are perpetually traveling on the rhythmic waves. These waves are living with a form of life we can hardly comprehend. They are always bringing us mental and spiritual food; they are always carrying mental and spiritual food from us to others. The thought in your mind is borne to another mind when you have no suspicion that any such action has taken place. The thought in another mind is wafted to yours when you may believe that it originated in yourself. It has often been observed that similar impulses become manifest in widely separated directions all at once. A certain discovery is made by two or even three investigators at the same time, while others are on the track of it; a certain trend will be taken by literature; a certain inclination by social habit; certain fashions will be adopted simultaneously by a large part of the world, and will simultaneously be abandoned. We have sought for an explanation of these mental epidemics, and except in thought-transference on the waves of rhythm, I do not think we shall find one. These waves, it would seem, are forever active, bear-

ing every grain of thought-force that is worthy to live instantaneously to its destination.

For the use of this rhythm of the universe intelligence, as we understand the word, is not an essential. The force is to too great a degree the common property of all created things to allow brain to have a special claim on it. Beings that we generally estimate as low in the scale have an intimate sense of this rhythm, while man has lost command of it. Insects, fishes, birds, all vibrate to it, with a consequent heightening of their powers. A movement far outside the probable range of its vision will disturb a fly; the shadow of a hand on water will cause a school of fish to swerve; birds, almost to our obtuse sight, soar, hover, and swoop in absolute sympathy with the universal throb.

“The mediums and others similarly gifted,” Henry Talbot writes further, “are people whose sensibilities resemble those of the birds and animals. Their intelligence has not blunted their perception of rhythm, and they thus find themselves peculiarly adapted to thought-transmission. Unlike the birds, however, they have forgotten how to control

and direct this force. They represent in some degree what God intended us all to be, though in the case of most of us the sense of rhythm has been overwhelmed by worldly activities. If you observe a growing infant, you will note many indications of his possession of what I might call a sixth sense—the sense of rhythm. This is as a rule effectually blunted by his education; but sometimes, as in the case of mediums and persons possessing peculiar powers, the strength of the sixth sense is too great to be overcome. All indications of queer, weird, and incomprehensible knowledge or power may be considered as demonstrating the sense of rhythm. These signs are not uncanny or mysterious, but merely natural.”

I asked about social intuitions, like sympathy and tact.

“All intuitions, tact, sympathy, and so forth, are indications of the sense of rhythm. Those who are able to read the mind have it to a considerable degree. Much might be done with their gift if they would control and direct but not exploit it.”

“Is spirituality the first essential to our intercourse with those on your plane?”

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“ Yes. I would say that spirituality is the prime requisite, but I would give the word its fullest meaning—aspiration—a desire for good—the *épanouissement* of divine passion, though this may be expressed in small ways and by creatures otherwise lacking in development.”

I asked if by this he meant that the animals were capable of what might be considered as spirituality.

“ A sense of rhythm indicates a potential spirituality. That is, it shows that the intelligence of the creature is in harmony with God. Conscious aspiration may be lacking, and, if so, there is no exact spirituality, since that word implies a voluntary use of the intellect. But a potential spirituality is there, ready to be awakened with a more intense use of the mind. The sense of rhythm may, however, be exercised by beings of conscious spirituality, in which case it becomes an auxiliary to perfection of harmony. A creature possessing both sense of rhythm and conscious spirituality would be highly developed and of great power.”

“ Is not, then, a consciousness of rhythm essential to the act of thought-exchange? ”

“The sense of rhythm, whether conscious or not, is essential to thought-exchange, since the thoughts pass on the waves of rhythm from soul to soul. The waves of rhythm are the only means of transmission, and love the only vehicle which can be transmitted.* Now, a consciousness of the waves of rhythm would help greatly; but some, as I have explained, possess the sense of rhythm unconsciously, receiving messages as do the birds. These messages cannot be of a high order of intellectuality unless the person also possesses spirituality—a conscious aspiration of the mind. Spirituality is often fretted by its ignorance of rhythm, and from this comes much of the doubt and suffering of spiritually-minded people. For perfection of communication, the creature must possess both sense of rhythm and spirituality. The cases mentioned above are like those of people desiring to mount, but who can find neither stairs nor ladder, though both are close at hand.”

“Have the waves of rhythm any connection with the Hertzian waves with which wireless telegraphy has made us familiar?”

* Love is used as including all other forms of good.

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“It is the same principle, only that the Hertzian waves have been discovered by science, whereas these waves discover science to you.”

“But wireless telegraphy does present one aspect of the general theme of rhythm?”

“Yes; one aspect.”

“And is not what is known among Christian Scientists as ‘absent treatment’ a method of taking advantage of the rhythmic waves?”

“It is just that. Christian Science recognizes rhythm, and in that case makes use of it.”

“And would the perversion of that use become what Christian Scientists call malicious animal magnetism?”

“Nothing evil can travel the waves of rhythm, since that would be inharmonious, and thus would not accord with the unity of the whole. Evil would be powerless to progress.”

I asked if thought-exchange between people on this plane differed in any way from thought-exchange between people on this plane and people on that.

“The only difference is unessential, and

consists in our greater understanding of the use of rhythm."

II

Enough has now been said, I think, to show that according to Henry Talbot's teaching, thought-exchange, is the natural means of intercommunication among people of all spheres, and that it takes place through the medium of that rhythmic life of the universe which may be considered the basic expression of God's mind. He says very plainly, in words which I am not yet at liberty to quote, that the world into which we look every hour of the day is full of this thought-communication, and we do not perceive it. A flock of sparrows rising from one tree and settling on another is an instance. Two dogs galloping off on an escapade which each of them understands is another. A brigade of ants going forth to do team-work is a third. What we call blind instinct is nothing but intellig. at comprehension of a force with which man has got out of touch. That we can get into touch with it again is the burden of his message. That by doing so we shall see the oneness of the universe and life and the end of

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separation and death is the prime inference he desires us to draw.

It will be seen, too, that he lays emphasis on the perfect naturalness of the intercommunion. Were we more harmonious with God, it would come to us as easily as singing to a bird. It cannot now come to us like that—but it can come. It has no connection with table-rappings or anything known as “spook-stuff.” These incantations he characterizes as wrong efforts to do right. In as far as the aims are right, he commends them; but he disapproves the means adopted.

“Though-transfer,” he says, “is the first heavenly sense. We acquire many senses here, but this is the first one, which you might easily possess. Let yourselves drift in harmony toward us. Don’t try, but become passive—sensitive to rhythm.”

It may be recalled that Ernest, the Harvard professor, implies the same when he speaks of the young men who come over as being allowed to use their own slangy vernacular “till they learn our system of thought-exchange.”

Henry Talbot has also stated more in detail that while it is the first “heavenly

sense," it can also be the last earthly one. It is the highest reach of this plane, just as it is the point to which that plane comes farthest down. In it, therefore, the earthly and the heavenly find a common meeting-ground.

The supreme example of the mastery of this power on our present plane was undoubtedly Jesus of Nazareth. One can say of Him that He was entirely in harmony with the rhythm of creation, and so with the design of God. Thought-reading, thought-transfer, thought-exchange are processes of which He gives many illustrations. Telling the woman of Samaria at the well, "all things that ever she did," and turning from one end of a great hall to look at Peter, who was denying Him at the other end, He shows this power dramatized.

"His life was the one true demonstration of rhythm," Henry Talbot says, "ever made on earth since evil took root there. He understood the fundamental laws, and thus was able in the natural course of things to perform those acts which you call miracles. These could be performed likewise by anyone of us if we regained, at the same time, our

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faith and our sense of rhythm. This is why I lay so much stress on education, which must *foster* rather than suppress the God-gifts." *

Thus, the sense of rhythm is a power we all possess potentially. In ages when we were more elemental, we possessed it actively, losing its use in proportion as we became more self-conscious. With the growing knowledge that our thoughts were so frequently evil, we closed our minds against other minds, and for the same reason found other minds closed against ours. The loss of the faculty was consequently due to fear.

The regaining of it must be due to confidence. The first step in this form of intercourse must be in believing it to be possible.

This is more important than it may seem on the surface, for the reason that a vast majority of the human race do not believe it to be possible. The mind that was shut ages ago finds it difficult now to open. Fish that have spawned for centuries in the total darkness of subterranean lakes, and which, with eyes perfectly formed, can no longer see, would be equally blind if transferred

* In passages not quoted.

to waters in the sunlight. They would, however, be blind from helplessness, whereas we are blind from indolence. We are like sightless men told that with a little trouble they could see, and who refuse to take the pains.

“Practice,” writes Henry Talbot in reference to this subject, “when you have realized the opportunity, comes easily. The most difficult problem is to realize the opportunity.”

III

I should like to point out here that between thought-reading, thought-transfer, and thought-exchange there is an obvious difference. The first does not necessarily imply the second, nor the second the first; though the third means both.

Thought-reading is that power which some men possess of detecting an occasional thought in another man's mind, and which Henry Talbot explains as a vestige of our long-disused sense of rhythm.

Thought-transfer may be most easily illustrated by the practice of the Christian Science healer in sending a good and healthy conviction over the waves of rhythm to im-

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plant itself in a mind in need of it. According to the impulse of the mind sending out the thought and the receptivity of that which takes it in, the treatment is successful. Only a good, loving, beneficent force, Henry Talbot has told us, can travel in this way. The attempt to project an evil thought would be like trying to make a railway train travel through the air. There is no fear, therefore, of thought-transfer on the waves of rhythm being used for evil purposes. A wrong wish wouldn't go.

Thought-exchange is the highest development of this power, and the one we are bidden to covet. It means not only thought-reading and thought-transference but a directness and simplicity of communication far more accurate than can be conveyed by words. It is always recognized that Talleyrand's paradox that language was given us to conceal our thoughts is essentially true. It would be wholly true if it said that language *was coined* by us to conceal our thoughts, which would apparently come nearer to the fact.

For this reason, thought-exchange between present dwellers on this plane can only be

used to a limited degree. Our evil thoughts are obstacles difficult to overcome. If we are to cultivate the faculty along the line of least resistance it must be in thought-exchange between this plane and the one next above us. To that we naturally want to send only such thoughts as have been purified, while those there have only purified thoughts to send to us.

That, every instant of our time, myriads of such thoughts are traveling back and forth over God's living wires, Henry Talbot assures us—only that, refusing to perceive them, we get little of their comfort and light. The following slight incident will afford an example of the promptness of the transmission.

On an occasion when Jennifer was writing for Henry Talbot, a lady present wondered if she could send a message of affection and gratitude to a Mrs. H., who had been kind to her in childhood.

“Your thoughts and our reception are instantaneous,” he wrote, “Mrs. H. has E.'s message now.”

Immediately the pencil began slowly, in another hand from that which recorded

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Henry Talbot's utterances, to trace the words:

"Thank you, my dear. I always love you."

This being signed by Mrs. H.'s Christian name, the original speaker went on with what he had been saying. But that Jennifer was not unconsciously producing what she felt the lady would like to hear is indicated, if not proved, by the following as the sequel. In the middle of a sentence, Henry Talbot, aware that there had been an interruption of another personality, suddenly wrote:

"Is it me you want to talk to?"

Assured that it was he said, "Thank you," and began again. Once more he broke off, with the words: "There is some confusion here. I, Henry Talbot, have known that you wished to speak with me, but have wanted to ask whether in regard to some of these other people mentioned you would like a better informant."

When it was explained that the other people had been mentioned only as objects of the gratitude of those present—the general topic being gratitude—the interview went on without further interruption. I speak of this

slight break, not as relevant to our immediate purpose but only as a indication that Jennifer herself was not directing the course of what was said. Had she been doing so, the misunderstanding would not have arisen.

The main point to which I would ask the reader's attention here is this, that whether he is conscious of it or not, the transference of his thought is forever taking place. All his good and kindly impulses with regard to those who have preceded him to the plane above reach their object as soon as formed. He may not know it; he may not believe it; but he cannot help its taking place. There is many a mourner longing to reach someone who has gone on, and who never learns that there is not a single second of separation. To give us this information seems to be a large part of Henry Talbot's mission in working between the spheres. This task is undertaken not only for our sakes on this plane but for their sakes on that. One gathers that in many ways it has been as hard for those we love to know that we have felt ourselves cut off from them as it has been for us.

IV

While it would be incorrect to say that Henry Talbot has a method of imparting this intercourse like that which men have of teaching a language or strengthening the memory, there are several points which those who would like to speak directly to the other plane must take into consideration.

In the first place, they must believe that it can be done. "Unbelief is a barrier," writes Ernest, on this subject, "and honest doubt an obstacle." In other words, unbelief makes communication impossible, and doubt, he says elsewhere, is the worst of all the difficulties that can actually be overcome. To ourselves, doubt is something of a virtue. It is a sign of hard-headedness and superior intelligence. To them, it is, in the first place, a questioning of personal veracity, and in the next a denial, or almost a denial, of that universe of living love which constitutes their bliss.

Assuming that we reduce doubt to a minimum, our next step is not to be too difficult.

"I receive what claim to be messages from my husband, written with my own hand,"

a lady said the other day, "but they are so much like what I know he would say that I cannot believe they come from him."

Our dread of the obvious is like our dread of what is "simple, natural, and in the light." It is the old demand for signs and wonders. We forget that by far the greater part of our life with those we care for is along the lines of the obvious. When they come back to us with simple words of happiness and love, we reject them because they are not solemn and portentous. As a matter of fact, words of happiness and love are the easiest for the inexperienced to send over the waves of rhythm. To convey such expressions rhythm emanates from God's mind.

It must also be remembered that thought is the most powerful of all agencies.

"Do you often see Ernest?" was asked of his mother.

"Whenever we think of each other," was the reply, "we are together."

Thought is the most compelling call we can send out. It is heard instantaneously, Henry Talbot has assured us, in passages I have already given, and never fails to bring an answer, though, in the vast majority of

cases, we do not recognize the source of the response.

For this lack of recognition, grief is largely to blame.

“Grief is a great obstacle,” he states, “for it is unrhythmical, and thus counteracts the delicate mechanism of the waves. A message can travel all the way from us to the person desired, and there be held up indefinitely by the censor, Grief, who either confiscates or changes the nature of the message. Grief and Death must be abolished if we are to have Life in its fullness, for Life in its fullness is Joy. Let yourselves rest quietly in the assurance of God’s love. Then all your thoughts will be messages and communications with the Father.”

After a willingness to send thought-messages, the next essential to thought-exchange is a willingness to receive them; and there can be no willingness to receive them without some credit given to the authenticity of the reply. It is an excellent thing to be on one’s guard against self-deception; yet if one is always on one’s guard against self-deception *and nothing else*, it is impossible to get anywhere. To reject a comforting

message because, like the lady quoted above, one knows that it is what the speaker would naturally say, is to put an end to intercourse. Similarly, to be unwilling to begin with the easy things before going on to the more difficult is not in the line of common sense.

Between the easy things, like words of love, and the dull or foolish things that often come through mediums, there is, however, a distinction. It has often been objected that those who speak in this way, having at last got the chance to say something to our world, make very little use of it in telling us what we want to know. Henry Talbot has explained above that mediums cannot, as a rule, convey messages "of a high order of intellectuality," having a sense of rhythm, it is true, but lacking, as they frequently do, "conscious aspiration of the mind." To my question as to whether it was not chiefly the less developed on that plane who make use of this method of communication, the reply came, vigorously written:

"Exactly."

Moreover, it is important to remember that, according to this teacher, intercourse with the plane next above us is part of our

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intercourse with God. Separation from those who love us and whom we love is no more part of His plan than is separation from Himself.

“All through the Old Testament,” he writes, “you can mark the degree of harmony and sensitiveness to rhythm by the communications with God. This has very rarely been the case since the days of established ecclesiasticism. Joan of Arc has been the most marked instance of comparatively modern days.”

I asked if our great discoverers and inventors were not in harmony with rhythm.

“In a one-sided way.”

“And have not many of us been moved by rhythm, without knowing what it was?”

“A great many have been; but they have let the clergy take the office of religion-brokers. They have not communicated directly with God. That is why so many simple, uneducated souls acquire through rhythm a wisdom which is never accorded to the so-called wise. Knowledge has obstinate human attributes which at times prevent its use.”

Simplicity, directness, the lighted mind,

the open heart, something akin to the receptive trust of those who are "converted and become as little children" would seem, then, to be the necessary gifts of all who wish to speak this wonderful thought-language and hear it in response,

V

But, because this ideal is long to wait for, some of the more ardent on the other plane avail themselves of any opening that may present itself. So eager are they to make their existence and love known to us that whatever will attract our attention is utilized to gain it. In this respect, one may say, in general, that the more highly developed seek the more highly developed ways.

Those of lower development, as we have seen, will speak through mediums. Those more advanced take other means of expressing thought which nevertheless fall short of thought-exchange. What will spell out words being obviously the easiest instrument to hand, such toys as planchette and the ouija-board have been made to serve the purpose.

"These things," says Henry Talbot, "are

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better than nothing, but are so fallible that it is unwise to pin faith on them. They are easily manipulated, but do not lend themselves to the expression of coherent thoughts, unless the medium be very gifted. When that is the case, handwriting would be better."

Even handwriting, however, cannot always be relied on.

"There are no evil spirits," he informs us, "but there is a missing link somewhere which leads to messages being garbled. When that happens, we give warning to those who can receive it not to believe the apparent words. It is an imperfection in transmission which by perseverance can be overcome."

Elsewhere he says:

"There are imperfections in transmission, but fewer by this channel than by that of mediums. The imperfections arise from the human element. Either the transmitter becomes fatigued, or allows his or her personality to intrude, or is overcome by doubt or strong desire. The necessary requisite for good transmission is to keep the mental track cleared and allow our message to run down it."

Another possibility of error arises from

the nature of the things we want to talk about.

“Is it right,” I inquired, “to ask those on your plane about what is taking place, or is to take place, on ours?”

“That is always possible, but must not be abused. Do not trouble them with earthly things inconceivable here. That is, do not talk to them of evil, for it would keep them back in their development.”

It is of evil, or of circumstances in which evil is an element, that we so often wish to question them, and while their love makes them anxious to answer us, their comprehension is easily bewildered.

Questions of concrete date are also difficult for them to deal with, since our conception of time is to them no more than a fading memory.

“Our only time,” Henry Talbot tells us, “is what the individual accomplishes in rhythm. That is, the great rhythm—the counterpointal rhythm or composite rhythm—is time, and the varieties of development our only comparative measure.”

For this reason, the attempt to recapture the days and dates recorded by our almanacs,

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which they sometimes make to satisfy us, not infrequently leads to disappointment and to the rejection of their evidence. Similarly, their sense of fact is different from ours. In a passage in "The Seven Purposes" too long to quote, someone explains that what they see as God's will is to them already done. They will thus occasionally make statements which, while true from their point of view, are not yet true from ours, leading to misunderstanding and confusion.

Much of this could be avoided if we on this plane were to limit our questions to such matters as they can naturally deal with. They do not pretend to know everything, or to be able always to foretell the future. The subjects they can help us in are those which pertain to their own conditions and what we call the great verities. All that a yearning love can accomplish for us they will do, but even so they are not omnipotent. After all, their world is but this world, enhanced, magnified, beautified, purified, but only one degree beyond ours.

It is, perhaps, in our sleep that their contact with us is closest.

"Sleep," in the language of Henry Tal-

bot, "is a great bond. Its resemblance to death or glorification is striking, not only in appearance but in fact. In sleep, you experience in miniature the effects that are also accomplished by glorification. Refreshment and recreation are greatly magnified in the awakening here; but you can form an idea of it from your sensations on awakening there after a night of especially restful repose. In sleep, the soul, which never sleeps, comes nearer us and is able, on the re-awakening of the senses, to bring to the body a sense of closer harmony with creation, which constitutes refreshment or true recreation. . . . Dreams are the fragments which you remember of our messages. You usually remember them in a degree which makes them unintelligible. When they come to you as a hodge-podge of facts, do not trouble to untangle them; but when you wake with a sense of peace and renewed vigor, seek for the cause, and piece together what you have retained. The memory will in this way become strengthened."

Of one who complained that his dreams were mostly unpleasant he said, in words that will probably apply to a good many:

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“His dreams partake of the dual nature which is his great hindrance. He is both peculiarly advanced and peculiarly primitive in his development. His so-called civilization is the product of his intense intellectuality, of which his body partakes in part. In some respects he is particularly elemental—animal—and the fact that he is less so in certain ways than average individuals makes him more so in certain other ways. In his sleep, he returns to elemental instincts which—while producing a more primitive creature temporarily—make him at the same time more sensitive to rhythm. He is more accessible to messages while in that state. His sleep is more agreeable when we reach him through rhythm, and less agreeable when he is purely elemental. He must cultivate his sleep as he does his mind.”

“Sleep,” he says again, “is not an abandoning of personality to a blind force but a conscious harmonizing of the body, mind, and soul with God. . . . The special value of sleep is that, in the case of most individuals, the sense of rhythm is partially regained, and an apparently inordinate degree of pleasure and vigor experienced. *It is only when*

man resigns the direction of his mind that he becomes rhythmical; and thus in sleep he obtains the greatest refreshment and renewal that he knows. By man's not only refraining from obstructing but positively aiding in the re-establishment of the consciousness of rhythm, a force of love can be built up which can travel the rhythmic waves with ease and abolish the barrier of death."

VI

Of all that has been said in this and preceding chapters, this may be stated as the summing up:

Men and women as expressions of God are immortally endowed with life, love, and intelligence, rendering them potentially victorious over all impediments, including death. They have made themselves deaf, blind, and impotent only by the willful shutting of their perceptions against the forces that sweep the universe. Birds, fishes, and insects, which are unable to control their minds as man is able to control his, are alive to much that we have ceased to see, and babies are born to a harmony with God which we speedily teach them to quench. Those who have preceded

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us to another sphere we kill in fact, while in words declaring we believe them to be alive. Into the imaginary universe of man's creation, as distinct from the true universe which is of God, we have induced ignorance, limitation, darkness, poverty, inequality, injustice, sickness, death, grief, and a sense of a world amiss and awry, unhappy, hateful, and futile.

The call of Henry Talbot and of others doing the same work is to come out of this state of negation. It is not limited to intercourse between this plane and the next, though that is involved in it. It stops short at nothing but a perception of our life, love, and power as part of the Infinity of God. "Awake thou that sleepest and arise from the dead!" These words of St. Paul may be taken as the text of the new message. For death we must substitute life, for helplessness we must realize power; for poverty we must understand sufficiency to be but the counter for the infinitude of God's love toward the individual. Abundance or stint in our supply we must see to be dependent on our knowledge of munificence. So with health; so with strength; so with pleasure;

so with whatever contributes to existence as an energetic, exhilarating, joyful blessedness, of which every minute is delight.

“A little life rounded by a sleep and a forgetting,” is no part of God’s endowment. Separation, affliction, sorrow are equally foreign to His Design. “See the universe as one,” Henry Talbot begs of us; to which we may add: See it as living; see it as vibrant with the divine passion of its Maker; see every bud and bird as an expression of a tenderness to which no detail is too small, as no system of suns is too vast, for its solicitude; and see yourself as, on this planet at least, the highest form of that expression, unlimited, undying, unafraid. In proportion to our effort to live up to this conception of ourselves, the Christ in us is liberated, is risen from the dead, and death ceases to have dominion over us.

THE END





